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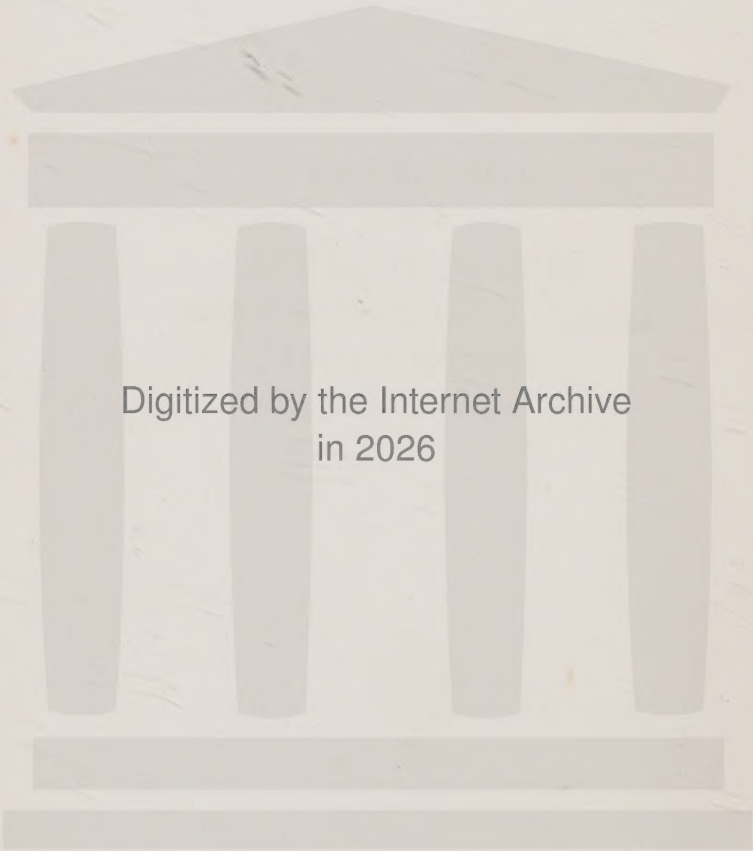
VOLUME XIII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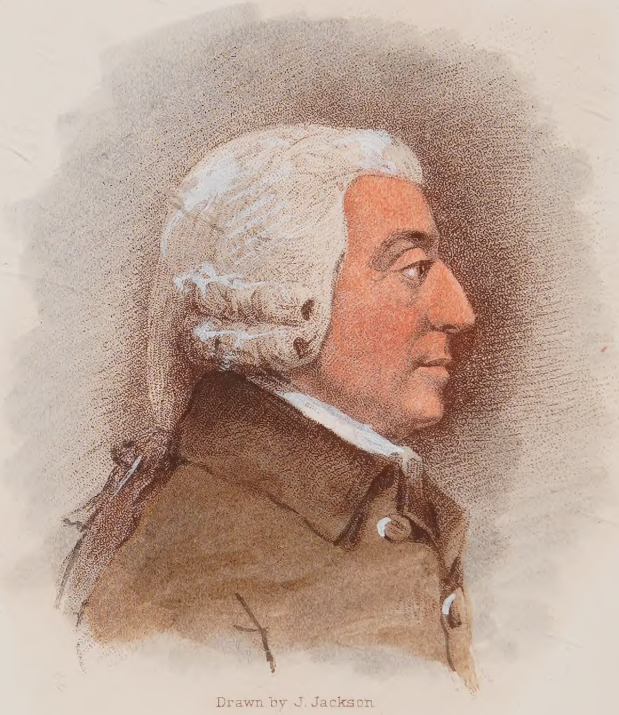

Drawn by J. Jackson

ADAM SMITH, L.L.D.

Works

REVIEWS AND POLITICAL TRACTS

By SAMUEL JOHNSON

PAFRAETS BOOK COMPANY
TROY NEW YORK

Of this Literary Club Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson Seven Hundred and Seventy-four Sets have been printed from type on Special Water Marked Paper, of which this Copy is N° 118

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From a painting by J. Jackson

SAMUEL DYER, Esqr., F. R. S.
From a painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds — *Facing page* 96

JAMES NORTHCOTE, Esqr.
From a painting by Hoare — *Facing page* 224

A DISSERTATION UPON THE GREEK COMEDY

TRANSLATED FROM BRUMOY

ADVERTISEMENT

I CONCLUDE this work, according to my promise, with an account of the comick theatre, and entreat the reader, whether a favourer or an enemy of the ancient drama, not to pass his censure upon the authors or upon me, without a regular perusal of this whole work. For, though it seems to be composed of pieces of which each may precede or follow without dependence upon the other, yet all the parts, taken together, form a system which would be destroyed by their disjunction. Which way shall we come at the knowledge of the ancients' shows, but by comparing together all that is left of them? The value and necessity of this comparison determined me to publish all, or to publish nothing. Besides, the reflections on each piece, and on the general taste of antiquity, which, in my opinion, are not without importance, have a kind of obscure gradation, which I have carefully endeavoured to preserve, and of which the thread would be lost by him who should slightly glance sometimes upon one piece, and sometimes upon another. It is a

[a] Published by Mrs. Lennox in 4to. 1759. To the third volume of this work the following advertisement is prefixed: "In this volume, the Discourse on the Greek Comedy, and the General Conclusion are translated by the celebrated author of the Rambler. The Comedy of the Birds, and that of Peace, by a young Gentleman. The Comedy of the Frogs, by the learned and ingenious Dr. Gregory Sharpe. The Discourse upon the Cyclops, by John Bourrya, esq. The Cyclops, by Dr. Grainger, author of the translation of Tibullus."

structure which I have endeavoured to make as near to regularity as I could, and which must be seen in its full extent, and in proper succession. The reader who skips here and there over the book, might make a hundred objections which are either anticipated, or answered in those pieces which he might have overlooked. I have laid such stress upon the connexion of the parts of this work, that I have declined to exhaust the subject, and have suppressed many of my notions, that I might leave the judicious reader to please himself by forming such conclusions as I supposed him like to discover, as well as myself. I am not here attempting to prejudice the reader by an apology either for the ancients, or my own manner. I have not claimed a right of obliging others to determine, by my opinion, the degrees of esteem which I think due to the authors of the Athenian stage; nor do I think that their reputation, in the present time, ought to depend upon my mode of thinking or expressing my thoughts, which I leave entirely to the judgment of the publick.

A DISSERTATION, &c.

1. REASONS WHY ARISTOPHANES MAY BE REVIEWED, WITHOUT TRANSLATING HIM ENTIRELY

I WAS in doubt for a long time, whether I should meddle at all with the Greek comedy, both because the pieces which remain are very few, the licentiousness of Aristophanes, their author, is exorbitant; and it is very difficult to draw, from the performances of a single poet, a just idea of Greek comedy.

Besides, it seemed that tragedy was sufficient to employ all my attention, that I might give a complete representation of that kind of writing, which was most esteemed by the Athenians and the wiser Greeks[b], particularly by Socrates, who set no value upon comedy or comick actors. But the very name of that drama, which in polite ages, and above all others in our own, has been so much advanced, that it has become equal to tragedy, if not preferable, inclines me to think that I may be partly reproached with an imperfect work, if, after having gone, as deep as I could, into the nature of Greek tragedy, I did not at least sketch a draught of the comedy.

I then considered, that it was not wholly impossible to surmount, at least in part, the difficulties which had stopped me, and to go somewhat farther than the learned writers[c], who have published, in French, some pieces of Aristophanes; not that I pretend to make large translations. The same reasons, which have hindered with respect to the more noble parts of the Greek drama, operate with double force upon my present subject. Though ridicule, which is the business of comedy, be not less uniform in all times, than the passions which are moved by tragick compositions; yet, if diversity of manners may sometimes disguise the passions themselves, how much greater change will be made in jocularities! The truth is, that they are so much changed

[b] There was a law which forbade any judge of the Areopagus to write comedy.

[c] Madame Dacier, M. Boivin.

by the course of time, that pleasantry and ridicule become dull and flat much more easily than the pathetick becomes ridiculous.

That which is commonly known by the term jocular and comick, is nothing but a turn of expression, an airy phantom, that must be caught at a particular point. As we lose this point, we lose the jocularity, and find nothing but dulness in its place. A lucky sally, which has filled a company with laughter, will have no effect in print, because it is shown single, and separate from the circumstance which gave it force. Many satirical jests, found in ancient books, have had the same fate; their spirit has evaporated by time, and have left nothing to us but insipidity. None but the most biting passages have preserved their points unblunted.

But, besides this objection, which extends universally to all translations of Aristophanes, and many allusions, of which time has deprived us, there are loose expressions thrown out to the populace, to raise laughter from corrupt passions, which are unworthy of the curiosity of decent readers, and which ought to rest eternally in proper obscurity. Not every thing, in this infancy of comedy, was excellent, at least, it would not appear excellent at this distance of time, in comparison of compositions of the same kind which lie before our eyes; and this is reason enough to save me the trouble of translating, and the reader that of perusing. As for that small number of writers, who delight in those delicacies, they give themselves very little trouble about

translations, except it be to find fault with them; and the majority of people of wit like comedies that may give them pleasure, without much trouble of attention, and are not much disposed to find beauties in that which requires long deductions to find it beautiful. If Helen had not appeared beautiful to the Greeks and Trojans, but by force of argument, we had never been told of the Trojan war.

On the other side, Aristophanes is an author more considerable than one would imagine. The history of Greece could not pass over him, when it comes to touch upon the people of Athens; this, alone, might procure him respect, even when he was not considered as a comick poet. But, when his writings are taken into view, we find him the only author from whom may be drawn a just idea of the comedy of his age; and, farther, we find, in his pieces, that he often makes attacks upon the tragick writers, particularly upon the three chief, whose valuable remains we have had under examination; and, what is yet worse, fell sometimes upon the state, and upon the gods themselves.

2. THE CHIEF HEADS OF THIS DISCOURSE

These considerations have determined me to follow, in my representation of this writer, the same method which I have taken in several tragick pieces, which is, that of giving an exact analysis, as far as the matter would allow, from which I deduce four important systems. First, upon the nature of the comedy of that age, without omitting that

of Menander[d]. Secondly, upon the vices and government of the Athenians. Thirdly, upon the notion we ought to entertain of Aristophanes, with respect to Eschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. Fourthly, upon the jest which he makes upon the gods. These things will not be treated in order, as a regular discourse seems to require, but will arise sometimes separately, sometimes together, from the view of each particular comedy, and from the reflections which this free manner of writing will allow. I shall conclude with a short view of the whole, and so finish my design.

4. HISTORY OF COMEDY

I shall not repeat here what Madame Dacier, and

[d] Menander, an Athenian, son of Diopethes and Hegestrates, was, apparently, the most eminent of the writers of the new comedy. He had been a scholar of Theophrastus: his passion for the women brought infamy upon him: he was squinteyed, and very lively. Of the one hundred and eighty comedies, or, according to Suidas, the eighty which he composed, and which are all said to be translated by Terence, we have now only a few fragments remaining. He flourished about the 115th Olympiad, 318 years before the Christian æra. He was drowned as he was bathing in the port of Piræus. I have told, in another place, what is said of one Philemon, his antagonist, not so good a poet as himself, but one who often gained the prize. This Philemon was older than him, and was much in fashion in the time of Alexander the great. He expressed all his wishes in two lines: "To have health, and fortune, and pleasure, and never to be in debt, is all I desire." He was very covetous, and was pictured with his fingers hooked, so that he set his comedies at a high price. He lived about a hundred years, some say a hundred and one. Many tales are told of his death. Valerius Maximus says, that he died with laughing at a little incident: seeing an ass eating his figs, he ordered his servant to drive her away; the man made no great haste, and the ass eat them all:" "Well done," says Philemon, "now give her some wine."—Apuleius and Quintilian placed this writer much below Menander, but give him the second place.

so many others before her, have collected of all that can be known relating to the history of comedy. Its beginnings are as obscure as those of tragedy, and there is an appearance that we take these two words in a more extensive meaning: they had both the same original; that is, they began among the festivals of the vintage, and were not distinguished from one another, but by a burlesque or serious chorus, which made all the soul, and all the body. But, if we give these words a stricter sense, according to the notion which has since been formed, comedy was produced after tragedy, and was, in many respects, a sequel and imitation of the works of Eschylus. It is, in reality, nothing more than an action set before the sight, by the same artifice of representation. Nothing is different but the object, which is merely ridicule. This original of true comedy will be easily admitted, if we take the word of Horace, who must have known, better than us, the true dates of dramatick works. This poet supports the system, which I have endeavoured to establish in the second discourse[e], so strongly, as to amount to demonstrative proof.

Horace[f] expresses himself thus: "Thespis is said to have been the first inventor of a species of tragedy, in which he carried about, in carts, players smeared with the dregs of wine, of whom some sung and others declaimed." This was the first attempt, both of tragedy and comedy; for Thespis made use only of one speaker, without the least appearance of

[e] Greek Theatre, part i. vol. i.

[f] Hor. Ar. Poet. v. 275.

dialogue. "Eschylus, afterwards, exhibited them with more dignity. He placed them on a stage, somewhat above the ground, covered their faces with masks, put buskins on their feet, dressed them in trailing robes, and made them speak in a more lofty style." Horace omits invention of dialogue, which we learn from Aristotle[g]. But, however, it may be well enough inferred from the following words of Horace; this completion is mentioned while he speaks of Eschylus, and, therefore, to Eschylus it must be ascribed: "Then first appeared the old comedy, with great success in its beginning." Thus we see that the Greek comedy arose after tragedy, and, by consequence, tragedy was its parent. It was formed in imitation of Eschylus, the inventor of the tragick drama; or, to go yet higher into antiquity, had its original from Homer, who was the guide of Eschylus. For, if we credit Aristotle[h], comedy had its birth from the Margites, a satirical poem of Homer, and tragedy from the Iliad and Odyssey. Thus the design and artifice of comedy were drawn from Homer and Eschylus. This will appear less surprising, since the ideas of the human mind are always gradual, and arts are seldom invented but by imitation. The first idea contains the seed of the second; this second, expanding itself, gives birth to a third; and so on. Such is the progress of the mind of man; it proceeds in its productions, step by step, in the same manner as nature multiplies her works by imitating, or repeating her

[g] Poet. ch. 4. [h] Ibid.

own act, when she seems most to run into variety. In this manner it was that comedy had its birth, its increase, its improvement, its perfection, and its diversity.

But the question is, who was the happy author of that imitation, and that show, whether only one, like Eschylus of tragedy, or whether they were several? for neither Horace, nor any before him, explained this[i]. This poet only quotes three writers who had reputation in the old comedy, Eupolis[j], Cratinus[k], and Aristophanes; of whom he says, "That they, and others, who wrote in the same

[i] "The alterations, which have been made in tragedy, were perceptible, and the authors of them known; but comedy has lain in obscurity, being not cultivated, like tragedy, from the time of its original; for it was long before the magistrates began to give comick choruses. It was first exhibited by actors, who played voluntarily, without orders of the magistrates. From the time that it began to take some settled form, we know its authors, but are not informed who first used masks, added prologues, increased the numbers of the actors, and joined all the other things which now belong to it. The first that thought of forming comick fables were Epicharmus and Phormys, and, consequently, this manner came from Sicily. Crates was the first Athenian that adopted it, and forsook the practice of gross raillery that prevailed before." Aristot. ch. 5. Crates flourished in the 82nd Olympiad, 450 years before our æra, twelve or thirteen years before Aristophanes.

[j] Eupolis was an Athenian; his death, which we shall mention presently, is represented differently by authors, who almost all agree that he was drowned. Elian adds an incident which deserves to be mentioned: he says (book x. Of Animals,) that one Augeas of Eleusis, made Eupolis a present of a fine mastiff, who was so faithful to his master as to worry to death a slave, who was carrying away some of his comedies. He adds, that, when the poet died at Egina, his dog staid by his tomb till he perished by grief and hunger.

[k] Cratinus of Athens, who was son of Callimedes, died at the age of ninety-seven. He composed twenty comedies, of which nine had the prize: he was a daring writer, but a cowardly warriour.

way, reprehended the faults of particular persons with excessive liberty." These are, probably, the poets of the greatest reputation, though they were not the first, and we know the names of many others[l]. Among these three we may be sure that Aristophanes had the greatest character, since not only the king of Persia[m] expressed a high esteem of him to the Grecian ambassadours, as of a man extremely useful to his country, and Plato[n] rated him so high, as to say that the Graces resided in his bosom; but, likewise, because he is the only writer of whom any comedies have made their way down to us, through the confusion of times. There are not, indeed, any proofs that he was the inventor of comedy, properly so called, especially, since he had not only predecessors who wrote in the same kind, but it is, at least, a sign that he had contributed more than any other to bring comedy to the perfection in which he left it. We shall, therefore, not inquire farther, whether regular comedy was the work of a single mind, which seems yet to be unsettled, or of several contemporaries, such as these which Horace quotes. We must distinguish three forms which comedy wore, in consequence of the genius of the writers, or of the laws of the magistrates, and the change of the government of many into that of few.

[l] Hertelius has collected the sentences of fifty Greek poets of the different ages of comedy.

[m] Interlude of the second act of the comedy entitled the Acharnians.

[n] Epigram attributed to Plato.

5. THE OLD, MIDDLE, AND NEW COMEDY

That comedy[o], which Horace calls the ancient, and which, according to his account, was after Eschylus, retained something of its original state, and of the licentiousness which it practised, while it was yet without regularity, and uttered loose jokes and abuse upon the passers-by from the cart of Thespis. Though it was now properly modelled, as might have been worthy of a great theatre, and a numerous audience, and deserved the name of a regular comedy, it was not yet much nearer to decency. It was a representation of real actions, and exhibited the dress, the motions, and the air, as far as could be done in a mask, of any one who was thought proper to be sacrificed to publick scorn. In a city so free, or, to say better, so licentious as Athens was, at that time, nobody was spared, not even the chief magistrate, nor the very judges, by whose voice comedies were allowed or prohibited. The insolence of those performances reached to open impiety, and sport was made equally with men and gods[p]. These are the features by which the greatest part of the compositions of Aristophanes will be known. In which, it may be particularly observed, that not the least appearance of praise will be found, and, therefore, certainly no trace of flattery or servility.

This licentiousness of the poets, to which, in some

[o] This history of the three ages of comedy, and their different characters, is taken in part from the valuable fragments of Platonius.

[p] It will be shown, how, and in what sense, this was allowed.

sort, Socrates fell a sacrifice, at last was restrained by a law. For the government, which was before shared by all the inhabitants, was now confined to a settled number of citizens. It was ordered that no man's name should be mentioned on the stage; but poetical malignity was not long in finding the secret of defeating the purpose of the law, and of making themselves ample compensation for the restraint laid upon authors, by the necessity of inventing false names. They set themselves to work upon known and real characters, so that they had now the advantage of giving a more exquisite gratification to the vanity of poets, and the malice of spectators. One had the refined pleasure of setting others to guess, and the other that of guessing right by naming the masks. When pictures are so like, that the name is not wanted, nobody inscribes it. The consequence of the law, therefore, was nothing more than to make that done with delicacy, which was done grossly before; and the art, which was expected would be confined within the limits of duty, was only partly transgressed with more ingenuity.

Of this, Aristophanes, who was comprehended in this law, gives us good examples in some of his poems. Such was that which was afterwards called the middle comedy.

The new comedy, or that which followed, was again an excellent refinement, prescribed by the magistrates, who, as they had before forbid the use of real names, forbade afterwards, real subjects, and

the train of choruses[q] too much given to abuse; so that the poets saw themselves reduced to the necessity of bringing imaginary names and subjects upon the stage, which, at once, purified and enriched the theatre; for comedy, from that time, was no longer a fury armed with torches, but a pleasing and innocent mirror of human life.

Chacun peint avec art dans ce nouveau miroir
S'y vit avec plaisir, ou crut ne s'y pas voir!
L'avare des premiers rit du tableau fidèle
D'un avare souvent tracé sur son modèle;
Et mille fois un fat finement exprimé
Méconnut le portrait sur lui-même formé[r].

The comedy of Menander and Terence is, in propriety of speech, the fine comedy. I do not repeat all this after so many writers, but just to recall it to memory, and to add to what they have said, something which they have omitted, a singular effect of publick edicts appearing in the successive progress of the art. A naked history of poets and of poetry, such as has been often given, is a mere body without soul, unless it be enlivened with an account of the birth, progress, and perfection of the art, and of the causes by which they were produced.

6. THE LATIN COMEDY

To omit nothing essential which concerns this part, we shall say a word of the Latin comedy. When the arts passed from Greece to Rome, comedy took

[q] Perhaps the chorus was forbid in the middle age of the comedy. Platonius seems to say so.

[r] Despréaux Art Poét. chant. 8.

its turn among the rest; but the Romans applied themselves only to the new species, without chorus or personal abuse; though, perhaps, they might have played some translations of the old or the middle comedy; for Pliny gives an account of one which was represented in his own time. But the Roman comedy, which was modelled upon the last species of the Greek, hath, nevertheless, its different ages, according as its authors were rough or polished. The pieces of Livius Andronicus[s], more ancient, and less refined than those of the writers who learned the art from him, may be said to compose the first age, or the old Roman comedy and tragedy. To him you must join Nevius, his contemporary, and Ennius, who lived some years after him. The second age comprises Pacuvius, Cecilius, Accius, and Plautus, unless it shall be thought better to reckon Plautus with Terence, to make the third and highest age of the Latin comedy, which may properly be called the new comedy, especially with regard to Terence, who was the friend of Lelius, and the faithful copier of Menander.

But the Romans, without troubling themselves with this order of succession, distinguished their comedies by the dresses[t] of the players. The robe, called prætexta, with large borders of purple, being the formal dress of magistrates in their dignity, and in the exercise of their office, the actors, who had this dress, gave its name to the comedy. This is the

[s] The year of Rome 514, the first year of the 135th Olympiad.

[t] Prætextæ, Togatæ, Tabernariæ.

same with that called trabeata[u], from trabea, the dress of the consuls in peace, and the generals in triumph. The second species introduced the senators, not in great offices, but as private men; this was called togata, from toga. The last species was named tabernaria, from the tunick, or the common dress of the people, or rather from the mean houses which were painted on the scene. There is no need of mentioning the farces, which took their name and original from Atella, an ancient town of Campania, in Italy, because they differed from the low comedy only by greater licentiousness; nor of those which were called palliates, from the Greek, a cloak, in which the Greek characters were dressed upon the Roman stage, because that habit only distinguished the nation, not the dignity or character, like those which have been mentioned before. To say truth, these are but trifling distinctions; for, as we shall show in the following pages, comedy may be more usefully and judiciously distinguished by the general nature of its subjects. As to the Romans, whether they had, or had not, reason for these names, they have left us so little upon the subject, which is come down to us, that we need not trouble ourselves with a distinction which affords us no solid satisfaction. Plautus and Terence, the only authors of whom we are in possession, give us a fuller notion of the real nature of their comedy, with respect, at least, to their own times, than can be received from

[u] Suet. de Claris Grammat. says, that C. Melissus, librarian to Augustus, was the author of it.

names and terms, from which we have no real exemplification.

7. THE GREEK COMEDY IS REDUCED ONLY TO ARISTOPHANES

Not to go too far out of our way, let us return to Aristophanes, the only poet, in whom we can now find the Greek comedy. He is the single writer whom the violence of time has, in some degree, spared, after having buried in darkness, and almost in forgetfulness, so many great men, of whom we have nothing but the names and a few fragments, and such slight memorials, as are scarcely sufficient to defend them against the enemies of the honour of antiquity; yet these memorials are like the last glimmer of the setting sun, which scarce affords us a weak and fading light; yet from this glimmer we must endeavour to collect rays of sufficient strength to form a picture of the Greek comedy, approaching as near as possible to the truth.

Of the personal character of Aristophanes little is known; what account we can give of it must, therefore, be had from his comedies. It can scarcely be said, with certainty, of what country he was: the invectives of his enemies so often called in question his qualification as a citizen, that they have made it doubtful. Some said, he was of Rhodes, others of Egina, a little island in the neighbourhood, and all agreed that he was a stranger. As to himself, he said, that he was the son of Philip, and born in the Cydathenian quarter; but he confessed, that some of his fortune was in Egina, which was, prob-

ably, the original seat of his family. He was, however, formally declared a citizen of Athens, upon evidence, whether good or bad, upon a decisive judgment, and this for having made his judges merry by an application of a saying of Telemachus[v], of which this is the sense: "I am, as my mother tells me, the son of Philip: for my own part, I know little of the matter; for what child knows his own father?" This piece of merriment did him as much good, as Archias received from the oration of Cicero[w], who said that that poet was a Roman citizen. An honour which, if he had not inherited by birth, he deserved for his genius.

Aristophanes[x] flourished in the age of the great men of Greece, particularly of Socrates and Euripides, both of whom he outlived. He made a great figure during the whole Peloponnesian war, not merely as a comick poet, by whom the people were diverted, but as the censor of the government, as a man kept in pay by the state to reform it, and almost to act the part of the arbitrator of the publick[y]. A particular account of his comedies will best let us into his personal character as a poet, and into the nature of his genius, which is what we are most interested to know. It will, however, not be amiss

[v] Homer, Odyssey.

[w] Orat. pro Archia Poeta.

[x] In the year of the 85th Olympiad; 437 before our æra, and 317 of the foundation of Rome.

[y] The Greek comedies have been regarded, by many, in the light of political journals, the Athenian newspapers of the day, where, amidst the distortions of caricature, the lineaments of the times were strongly drawn. See Madame de Staël de la Litérature, c. iii.—Ed.

to prepossess our readers a little by the judgments that have been passed upon him by the criticks of our own time, without forgetting one of the ancients that deserves great respect.

8. ARISTOPHANES CENSURED AND PRAISED

"Aristophanes," says father Rapin, "is not exact in the contrivance of his fables; his fictions are not probable; he brings real characters upon the stage too coarsely, and too openly. Socrates, whom he ridicules so much in his plays, had a more delicate turn of burlesque than himself, and had his merriment without his impudence. It is true, that Aristophanes wrote amidst the confusion and licentiousness of the old comedy, and he was well acquainted with the humour of the Athenians, to whom uncommon merit always gave disgust, and, therefore, he made the eminent men of his time the subject of his merriment. But the too great desire which he had to delight the people, by exposing worthy characters upon the stage, made him, at the same time, an unworthy man; and the turn of his genius to ridicule was disfigured and corrupted by the indelicacy and outrageousness of his manners. After all, his pleasantry consists chiefly in new-coined puffy language. The dish of twenty-six syllables, which he gives, in his last scene of his Female Orators, would please few tastes in our days. His language is sometimes obscure, perplexed and vulgar; and his frequent play with words, his oppositions of contradictory terms, his mixture of tragick

and comick, of serious and burlesque, are all flat; and his jocularity, if you examine it to the bottom, is all false. Menander is diverting in a more elegant manner; his style is pure, clear, elevated, and natural; he persuades like an orator, and instructs like a philosopher; and, if we may venture to judge upon the fragments which remain, it appears that his pictures of civil life are pleasing, that he makes every one speak according to his character, that every man may apply his pictures of life to himself, because he always follows nature, and feels for the personages which he brings upon the stage. To conclude, Plutarch, in his comparison of these authors, says, that the muse of Aristophanes is an abandoned prostitute, and that of Menander a modest woman."

It is evident that this whole character is taken from Plutarch. Let us now go on with this remark of father Rapin, since we have already spoken of the Latin comedy, of which he gives us a description.

"With respect to the two Latin comick poets, Plautus is ingenious in his designs, happy in his conceptions, and fruitful of invention. He has, however, according to Horace, some low jocularities; and those smart sayings, which made the vulgar laugh, made him be pitied by men of higher taste. It is true, that some of his jests are extremely good, but others, likewise, are very bad. To this every man is exposed, who is too much determined to make sallies of merriment; they endeavour to raise that laughter by hyperboles, which would not arise by a just representation of things. Plautus is not

quite so regular as Terence in the scheme of his designs, or in the distribution of his acts, but he is more simple in his plot; for the fables of Terence are commonly complex, as may be seen in his Andria, which contains two amours. It was imputed, as a fault to Terence, that, to bring more action upon the stage, he made one Latin comedy out of two Greek: but then Terence unravels his plot more naturally than Plautus, which Plautus did more naturally than Aristophanes; and though Cæsar calls Terence but one half of Menander, because, though he had softness and delicacy, there was in him some want of sprightliness and strength; yet he has written in a manner so natural and so judicious, that, though he was then only a copy, he is now an original. No author has ever had a more exact sense of pure nature. Of Cecilius, since we have only a few fragments, I shall say nothing. All that we know of him is told us by Varrus, that he was happy in the choice of subjects."

Rapin omits many others for the same reason, that we have not enough of their works to qualify us for judges. While we are upon this subject, it will, perhaps, not displease the reader to see what that critick's opinion is of Lopes de Vega and Molière. It will appear, that with respect to Lopes de Vega, he is rather too profuse of praise: that, in speaking of Molière, he is too parsimonious. This piece will, however, be of use to our design, when we shall examine to the bottom what it is that ought to make the character of comedy.

"No man has ever had a greater genius for comedy than Lopes de Vega, the Spaniard. He had a fertility of wit, joined with great beauty of conception, and a wonderful readiness of composition; for he has written more than three hundred comedies. His name, alone, gave reputation to his pieces; for his reputation was so well established, that a work, which came from his hands, was sure to claim the approbation of the publick. He had a mind too extensive to be subjected to rules, or restrained by limits. For that reason he gave himself up to his own genius, on which he could always depend with confidence. When he wrote, he consulted no other laws than the taste of his auditors, and regulated his manner more by the success of his work than by the rules of reason. Thus he discarded all scruples of unity, and all the superstitions of probability." (This is certainly not said with a design to praise him, and must be connected with that which immediately follows.) "But as, for the most part, he endeavours at too much jocularity, and carries ridicule to too much refinement; his conceptions are often rather happy than just, and rather wild than natural; for, by subtilizing merriment too far, it becomes too nice to be true, and his beauties lose their power of striking by being too delicate and acute.

"Among us, nobody has carried ridicule in comedy farther than Molière. Our ancient comick writers brought no characters higher than servants to make sport upon the theatre; but we are diverted

upon the theatre of Molière by marquises and people of quality. Others have exhibited, in comedy, no species of life above that of a citizen; but Molière shows us all Paris, and the court. He is the only man amongst us, who has laid open those features of nature by which he is exactly marked, and may be accurately known. The beauties of his pictures are so natural, that they are felt by persons of the least discernment, and his power of pleasantry received half its force from his power of copying. His Misanthrope is, in my opinion, the most complete, and, likewise, the most singular character that has ever appeared upon the stage: but the disposition of his comedies is always defective some way or another. This is all which we can observe, in general, upon comedy."

Such are the thoughts of one of the most refined judges of works of genius, from which, though they are not all oraculous, some advantages may be drawn, as they always make some approaches to truth.

Madame Dacier[z], having her mind full of the merit of Aristophanes, expresses herself in this manner: "No man had ever more discernment than him, in finding out the ridiculous, nor a more ingenious manner of showing it to others. His remarks are natural and easy, and, what very rarely can be found, with great copiousness, he has great delicacy. To say all at once, the Attick wit, of which the ancients made such boast, appears more

[z] Preface to Plautus. Paris, 1684.

in Aristophanes than in any other that I know of in antiquity. But what is most of all to be admired in him is, that he is always so much master of the subject before him, that, without doing any violence to himself, he finds a way to introduce, naturally, things which, at first, appeared most distant from his purpose; and even the most quick and unexpected of his desultory sallies appear the necessary consequence of the foregoing incidents. This is that art which sets the dialogues of Plato above imitation, which we must consider as so many dramatick pieces, which are equally entertaining by the action, and by the dialogue. The style of Aristophanes is no less pleasing than his fancy; for, besides its clearness, its vigour and its sweetness, there is in it a certain harmony, so delightful to the ear, that there is no pleasure equal to that of reading it. When he applies himself to vulgar mediocrity of style, he descends without meanness; when he attempts the sublime, he is elevated without obscurity; and no man has ever had the art of blending all the different kinds of writing so equally together. After having studied all that is left us of Grecian learning, if we have not read Aristophanes, we cannot yet know all the charms and beauties of that language."

9. PLUTARCH'S SENTIMENTS UPON ARISTOPHANES AND MENANDER

This is a pompous eulogium; but let us suspend our opinion, and hear that of Plutarch, who, being an ancient, well deserves our attention, at least,

after we have heard the moderns before him. This is then the sum of his judgment concerning Aristophanes and Menander. To Menander he gives the preference, without allowing much competition. He objects to Aristophanes, that he carries all his thoughts beyond nature; that he writes rather to the crowd than to men of character; that he affects a style obscure and licentious; tragical, pompous, and mean, sometimes serious, and sometimes ludicrous, even to puerility; that he makes none of his personages speak according to any distinct character, so that in his scenes the son cannot be known from the father, the citizen from the boor, the hero from the shopkeeper, or the divine from the servingman. Whereas, the diction of Menander, which is always uniform and pure, is very justly adapted to different characters, rising, when it is necessary, to vigorous and sprightly comedy, yet without transgressing the proper limits, or losing sight of nature, in which Menander, says Plutarch, has attained a perfection to which no other writer has arrived. For, what man, besides himself, has ever found the art of making a diction equally suitable to women and children, to old and young, to divinities and heroes? Now Menander has found this happy secret, in the equality and flexibility of his diction, which, though always the same, is, nevertheless, different upon different occasions; like a current of clear water, (to keep closely to the thoughts of Plutarch,) which running through banks differently turned, complies with all their turns backward and forward, without

changing any thing of its nature or its purity. Plutarch mentions it, as a part of the merit of Menander, that he began very young, and was stopped only by old age, at a time when he would have produced the greatest wonders, if death had not prevented him. This, joined to a reflection, which he makes as he returns to Aristophanes, shows that Aristophanes continued a long time to display his powers: for his poetry, says Plutarch, is a strumpet that affects sometimes the airs of a prude, but whose impudence cannot be forgiven by the people, and whose affected modesty is despised by men of decency. Menander, on the contrary, always shows himself a man agreeable and witty, a companion desirable upon the stage, at table, and in gay assemblies; an extract of all the treasures of Greece, who deserves always to be read, and always to please. His irresistible power of persuasion, and the reputation which he has had, of being the best master of language of Greece, sufficiently shows the delightfulness of his style. Upon this article of Menander, Plutarch does not know how to make an end; he says, that he is the delight of philosophers, fatigued with study; that they use his works as a meadow enamelled with flowers, where a purer air gratifies the sense; that, notwithstanding the powers of the other comick poets of Athens, Menander has always been considered as possessing a salt peculiar to himself, drawn from the same waters that gave birth to Venus. That, on the contrary, the salt of Aristophanes is bitter, keen, coarse, and cor-

rosive; that one cannot tell whether his dexterity, which has been so much boasted, consists not more in the characters than in the expression, for he is charged with playing often upon words, with affecting antithetical allusions; that he has spoiled the copies which he endeavoured to take after nature; that artifice in his plays is wickedness, and simplicity brutishness; that his jocularity ought to raise hisses rather than laughter; that his armours have more impudence than gaiety; and that he has not so much written for men of understanding, as for minds blackened with envy, and corrupted with debauchery.

10. THE JUSTIFICATION OF ARISTOPHANES

After such a character there seems no need of going further; and one would think, that it would be better to bury, for ever, the memory of so hateful a writer, that makes us so poor a recompense for the loss of Menander, who cannot be recalled. But, without showing any mercy to the indecent or malicious sallies of Aristophanes, any more than to Plautus, his imitator, or, at least, the inheritor of his genius, may it not be allowed us to do, with respect to him, what, if I mistake not, Lucretius[a] did to Ennius, from whose muddy verses he gathered jewels, "Enni de stercore gemmas?"

Besides, we must not believe that Plutarch, who lived more than four ages after Menander, and more than five after Aristophanes, has passed so exact a judgment upon both, but that it may be fit

[a] Brumoy has mistaken Lucretius for Virgil.

to reexamine it. Plato, the contemporary of Aristophanes, thought very differently, at least, of his genius; for, in his piece called the Entertainment, he gives that poet a distinguished place, and makes him speak, according to his character, with Socrates himself, from which, by the way, it is apparent that this dialogue of Plato was composed before the time that Aristophanes wrote his Clouds, against Socrates. Plato is, likewise, said to have sent a copy of Aristophanes to Dionysius the tyrant, with advice to read it diligently, if he would attain a complete judgment of the state of the Athenian republick[b].

Many other scholars have thought that they might depart somewhat from the opinion of Plutarch. Frischlinus, for example, one of the commentators upon Aristophanes, though he justly allows his taste to be less pure than that of Menander, has yet undertaken his defence against the outrageous censure of the ancient critick. In the first place, he condemns, without mercy, his ribaldry and obscenity. But this part, so worthy of contempt, and written only for the lower people, according to the remark of Boivin, bad as it is, after all, is not the chief part which is left of Aristophanes. I will not say, with Frischlinus, that Plutarch seems in this to contradict himself, and, in reality, commends the poet when he accuses him of having adapted his language to the stage; by the stage, in

[b] "Morum hujus temporis picturam, velut in speculo, suis in comœdiis repræsentavit Aristophanes." Valckenaer, Oratio de publicis Athenienſium moribus.— Ed.

this place, he meant the theatre of farces, on which low mirth and buffoonery was exhibited. This plea of Frischlinus is a mere cavil; and though the poet had obtained his end, which was to divert a corrupted populace, he would not have been less a bad man, nor less a despicable poet, notwithstanding the excuse of his defender. To be able, in the highest degree, to divert fools and libertines, will not make a poet: it is not, therefore, by this defence that we must justify the character of Aristophanes. The depraved taste of the crowd, who once drove away Cratinus and his company, because the scenes had not low buffoonery enough for their taste, will not justify Aristophanes, since Menander found a way of changing the taste by giving a sort of comedy, not, indeed, so modest as Plutarch represents it, but less licentious than before. Nor is Aristophanes better justified, by the reason which he himself offers, when he says, that he exhibited debauchery upon the stage, not to corrupt the morals, but to mend them. The sight of gross faults is rather a poison than a remedy[c].

The apologist has forgot one reason, which appears to me to be essential to a just account. As far as we can judge by appearance, Plutarch had in his hands all the plays of Aristophanes, which were at least fifty in number. In these he saw more licen-

[c] Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.
Pope's Essay on Man, ii. 217.

tiousness than has come to our hands, though, in the eleven that are still remaining, there is much more than could be wished.

Plutarch censures him, in the second place, for playing upon words; and against this charge Frischlinus defends him with less skill. It is impossible to exemplify this in French. But, after all, this part is so little, that it deserved not so severe a reprehension, especially since, amongst those sayings, there are some so mischievously malignant, that they became proverbial, at least by the sting of their malice, if not by the delicacy of their wit. One example will be sufficient: speaking of the tax-gatherers, or the excisemen of Athens, he crushes them at once, by observing, non quod essent ταμίαι, sed λαμίαι. The word *lamiæ* signified, walking spirits, which, according to the vulgar notion, devoured men; this makes the spirit of the sarcasm against the tax-gatherers. This cannot be rendered in our language; but if any thing as good had been said in France, on the like occasion, it would have lasted too long, and, like many other sayings amongst us, been too well received. The best is that Plutarch himself confesses that it was extremely applauded.

The third charge is, a mixture of tragick and comick style. This accusation is certainly true; Aristophanes often gets into the buskin; but we must examine upon what occasion. He does not take upon him the character of a tragick writer; but, having remarked that his trick of parody was always well received, by a people who liked to laugh at that for

which they had been just weeping, he is eternally using the same craft; and there is scarcely any tragedy or striking passage known by memory, by the Athenians, which he does not turn into merriment, by throwing over it a dress of ridicule and burlesque, which is done sometimes by changing or transposing the words, and sometimes by an unexpected application of the whole sentence. These are the shreds of tragedy, in which he arrays the comick muse, to make her still more comick. Cratinus had before done the same thing; and we know that he made a comedy called Ulysses, to burlesque Homer and his Odyssey; which shows, that the wits and poets are, with respect to one another, much the same at all times, and that it was at Athens as here. I will prove this system by facts, particularly with respect to the merriment of Aristophanes, upon our three celebrated tragedians. This being the case, the mingled style of Aristophanes will, perhaps, not deserve so much censure as Plutarch has vented. We have no need of the travesty of Virgil, nor the parodies of our own time, nor of the Lutrin of Boileau, to show us, that this medly may have its merit upon particular occasions.

The same may be said, in general, of his obscurity, his meannesses, and his high flights, and of all the seeming inequality of style, which puts Plutarch in a rage. These censures can never be just upon a poet, whose style has always been allowed to be perfectly attick, and of an atticism which made him extremely delightful to the lovers of the Athenian

taste. Plutarch, perhaps, rather means to blame the choruses, of which the language is sometimes elevated, sometimes burlesque, alway very poetical, and, therefore, in appearance, not suitable to comedy. But the chorus, which had been borrowed from tragedy, was then all the fashion, particularly for pieces of satire, and Aristophanes admitted them, like the other poets of the old, and, perhaps, of the middle comedy; whereas Menander suppressed them, not so much in compliance with his own judgment, as in obedience to the publick edicts. It is not, therefore, this mixture of tragick and comick that will place Aristophanes below Menander.

The fifth charge is, that he kept no distinction of character; that, for example, he makes women speak like orators, and orators like slaves: but it appears, by the characters which he ridicules, that this objection falls of itself. It is sufficient to say, that a poet who painted not imaginary characters, but real persons, men well known, citizens whom he called by their names, and showed in dresses like their own, and masks resembling their faces, whom he branded in the sight of a whole city extremely haughty and full of derision; it is sufficient to say, that such a poet could never be supposed to miss his characters. The applause which his licentiousness produced, is too good a justification; besides, if he had not succeeded, he exposed himself to the fate of Eupolis, who, in a comedy called the Drowned Man, having imprudently pulled to pieces particular persons, more powerful than himself, was laid hold

of, and drowned more effectually than those he had drowned upon the open stage.

The condemnation of the poignancy of Aristophanes, as having too much acrimony, is better founded. Such was the turn of a species of comedy, in which all licentiousness was allowed; in a nation which made every thing a subject of laughter, in its jealousy of immoderate liberty, and its enmity, to all appearance, of rule and superiority; for the genius of independency, naturally produces a kind of satire, more keen than delicate, as may be easily observed in most of the inhabitants of islands. If we do not say, with Longinus, that a popular government kindles eloquence, and that a lawful monarchy stifles it; at least it is easy to discover, by the event, that eloquence in different governments takes a different appearance. In republicks it is more sprightly and violent, and in monarchies more insinuating and soft. The same thing may be said of ridicule; it follows the cast of genius, as genius follows that of government. Thus the republican raillery, particularly of the age which we are now considering, must have been rougher than that of the age which followed it, for the same reason that Horace is more delicate, and Lucilius more pointed. A dish of satire was always a delicious treat to human malignity; but that dish was differently seasoned, as the manners were polished more or less. By polished manners I mean that good-breeding, that art of reserve and self-restraint, which is the consequence of dependance. If one was to deter-

mine the preference due to one of those kinds of pleasantry, of which both have their value, there would not need a moment's hesitation: every voice would join in favour of the softer, yet without contempt of that which is rough. Menander will, therefore, be preferred, but Aristophanes will not be despised, especially since he was the first who quitted that wild practice of satirizing at liberty right or wrong, and by a comedy of another cast, made way for the manner of Menander, more agreeable yet, and less dangerous. There is, yet, another distinction to be made between the acrimony of the one, and the softness of the other; the works of the one are acrimonious, and of the other soft, because, the one exhibited personal, and the other, general characters; which leaves us still at liberty to examine, if these different designs might not be executed with equal delicacy.

We shall know this by a view of the particulars; in this place we say only that the reigning taste, or the love of striking likenesses, might justify Aristophanes for having turned, as Plutarch says, art into malignity, simplicity into brutality, merriment into farce, and amour into impudence; if, in any age, a poet could be excused for painting publick folly and vice, in their true colors.

There is a motive of interest, at the bottom, which disposed Elian, Plutarch, and many others, to condemn this poet without appeal. Socrates, who is said to have been destroyed by a poetical attack, at

the instigation of two wretches[d], has too many friends among good men, to have pardon granted to so horrid a crime. This has filled them with an implacable hatred against Aristophanes, which is mingled with the spirit of philosophy; a spirit, wherever it comes, more dangerous than any other. A common enemy will confess some good qualities in his adversary; but a philosopher, made partial by philoso-

[d] It is not certain, that Aristophanes did procure the death of Socrates; but, however, he is certainly criminal for having, in the Clouds, accused him, publickly, of impiety. B.— Many ingenious arguments have been advanced, since the time of Brumoy and Johnson, in vindication of Aristophanes, with regard to Socrates. It has been urged, that a man, of the established character of Socrates, could not be injured by the dramatic imputation of faults and follies, from which every individual in the theatre believed him to be exempt; while the vices of the sophists and rhetors, whom Aristophanes was really attacking, were placed in a more ludicrous, or more odious light, by a mental juxta-position with the pure and stern virtue of the master of Plato. This is very plausible; but it may still be doubted, whether the greater part of an Athenian audience, with all their native acuteness and practical criticism, would, at the moment, detect this subtile irony. If, indeed, it was irony, for still, with deference to great names be it spoken, it remains to be disproved, that the Clouds was the introductory step to a state-impeachment. Irony is, at best, a dangerous weapon, and has, too frequently, been wielded by vulgar hands, to purposes widely different from those which its authors designed. The Taruffe exposed to the indignation of France, a character, which every good man detests. But, was the cause of religious sincerity benefited, by Molière's representation of a sullen, sly, and sensual hypocrite? Did the French populace discriminate between such, and the sincere professor of christianity? The facts of the revolution give an awful answer to the question. Cervantes ridiculed the fooleries and affectation ingrafted upon knight errantry. Did he intend to banish honour, humanity and virtue, loyalty, courtesy and gentlemanly feeling from Spain? The people understood not irony, and Don Quixote combined with other causes, to degrade to its present abasement a land, so long renowned for her high and honourable chivalry, for "ladye-love, and feats of knightly worth." See likewise note on Adventurer, 84, and the references there made; and preface to the Idler.— Ed.

phy, is never at rest till he has totally destroyed him who has hurt the most tender part of his heart; that is, has disturbed him in his adherence to some character, which, like that of Socrates, takes possession of the mind. The mind is the freest part of man, and the most tender of its liberties; possessions, life, and reputation may be in another's power, but opinion is always independent. If any man can obtain that gentle influence, by which he ingratiates himself with the understanding, and makes a sect in a commonwealth, his followers will sacrifice themselves for him, and nobody will be pardoned that dares to attack him, justly or unjustly, because that truth, real or imaginary, which he maintained, is now become an idol. Time will do nothing for the extinction of this hatred; it will be propagated from age to age; and there is no hope that Aristophanes will ever be treated with tenderness by the disciples of Plato, who made Socrates his hero. Every body else may, perhaps, confess, that Aristophanes, though in one instance a bad man, may, nevertheless, be a good poet; but distinctions, like these, will not be admitted by prejudice and passion, and one or other dictates all characters, whether good or bad.

As I add my own reasons, such as they are, for or against Aristophanes, to those of Frischlinus, his defender, I must not omit one thing which he has forgot, and which, perhaps, without taking in the rest, put Plutarch out of humour, which is that perpetual farce which goes through all the come-

dies of Aristophanes, like the character of harlequin on the Italian theatre. What kind of personages are clouds, frogs, wasps, and birds? Plutarch, used to a comick stage of a very different appearance, must have thought them strange things; and, yet stranger must they appear to us, who have a newer kind of comedy, with which the Greeks were unacquainted. This is what our poet may be charged with, and what may be proved beyond refutation. This charge comprises all the rest, and against this I shall not pretend to justify him. It would be of no use to say, that Aristophanes wrote for an age that required shows which filled the eye, and grotesque paintings in satirical performances; that the crowds of spectators, which sometimes neglected Cratinus to throng Aristophanes, obliged him, more and more, to comply with the ruling taste, lest he should lose the publick favour by pictures more delicate and less striking; that, in a state, where it was considered as policy to lay open every thing that had the appearance of ambition, singularity, or knavery, comedy was become a haranguer, a reformer, and a publick counsellor, from whom the people learned to take care of their most valuable interests; and that this comedy, in the attempt to lead, and to please the people, claimed a right to the strongest touches of eloquence, and had, likewise, the power of personal painting, peculiar to herself. All these reasons, and many others, would disappear immediately, and my mouth would be stopped with a single word, with which every body would agree:

my antagonist would tell me that such an age was to be pitied, and, passing on from age to age, till he came to our own, he would conclude flatly that we are the only possessours of common sense; a determination with which the French are too much reproached, and which overthrows all the prejudice in favour of antiquity. At the sight of so many happy touches, which one cannot help admiring in Aristophanes, a man might, perhaps, be inclined to lament that such a genius was thrown into an age of fools; but what age has been without them? And have not we ourselves reason to fear, lest posterity should judge of Molière and his age, as we judge of Aristophanes? Menander altered the taste, and was applauded in Athens, but it was after Athens was changed. Terence imitated him at Rome, and obtained the preference over Plautus, though Cæsar called him but a demi-Menander, because he appears to want that spirit and vivacity which he calls the vis comica. We are now weary of the manner of Menander and Terence, and leave them for Molière, who appears like a new star in a new course. Who can answer, that in such an interval of time as has passed between these four writers, there will not arise another author, or another taste, that may bring Molière, in his turn, into neglect? Without going further, our neighbours, the English, think he wants force and fire. Whether they are right, or no, is another question; all that I mean to advance is, that we are to fix it as a conclusion, that comick authors must grow obsolete with the modes of life, if we admit any one age, or any one climate, for the

sovereign rule of taste. But let us talk with more exactness, and endeavour, by an exact analysis, to find out what there is in comedy, whether of Aristophanes and Plautus, of Menander and Terence, of Molière and his rivals, which is never obsolete, and must please all ages and all nations.

11. REMARKABLE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE STATE OF COMEDY, AND OTHER WORKS OF GENIUS, WITH REGARD TO THEIR DURATION

I now speak particularly of comedy; for we must observe that between that and other works of literature, especially tragedy, there is an essential difference, which the enemies of antiquity will not understand, and which I shall endeavour palpably to show.

All works show the age in which they are produced; they carry its stamp upon them; the manners of the times are impressed by indelible marks. If it be allowed, that the best of past times were rude in comparison with ours, the cause of the ancients is decided against them; and the want of politeness, with which their works are charged, in our days, must be generally confessed. History alone seems to claim exemption from this accusation. Nobody will dare to say of Herodotus or Thucydides, of Livius or Tacitus, that which has been said, without scruple, of Homer and the ancient poets. The reason is, that history takes the nearest way to its purpose, and gives the characters and practices of nations, be they what they will; it has no dependance upon its subject, and offers nothing to examination, but the art of the narrative. An history of China, well writ-

ten, would please a Frenchman, as well as one of France. It is otherwise with mere works of genius, they depend upon their subjects, and, consequently, upon the characters and practices of the times in which they were written; this, at least, is the light in which they are beheld. This rule of judgment is not equitable; for, as I have said, over and over, all the orators and the poets are painters, and merely painters. They exhibit nature, as it is before them, influenced by the accidents of education, which, without changing it entirely, yet give it, in different ages and climates, a different appearance; but we make their success depend, in a great degree, upon their subject, that is, upon circumstances which we measure by the circumstances of our own days. According to this prejudice, oratory depends more upon its subject than history, and poetry yet more than oratory. Our times, therefore, show more regard to Herodotus and Suetonius, than to Demosthenes and Cicero, and more to all these than to Homer or Virgil. Of this prejudice, there are regular gradations; and to come back to the point which we have left, we show, for the same imperceptible reason, less regard to tragick poets than to others. The reason is, that the subjects of their paintings are more examined than the art. Thus comparing the Achilles and Hippolytus of Euripides, with those of Racine, we drive them off the stage, without considering that Racine's heroes will be driven off, in a future age, if the same rule of judgment be followed, and one time be measured by another.

Yet tragedy, having the passions for its object, is not wholly exposed to the caprice of our taste, which would make our own manners the rule of human kind; for the passions of Grecian heroes are often dressed in external modes of appearance that disgust us, yet they break through the veil when they are strongly marked, as we cannot deny them to be in Eschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. The essence then gets the better of the circumstance. The passions of Greece and France do not so much differ by the particular characters of particular ages, as they agree by the participation of that which belongs to the same passion in all ages. Our three tragick poets will, therefore, get clear by suffering only a little ridicule, which falls directly upon their times; but these times and themselves will be well recompensed, by the admiration which their art will irresistibly enforce.

Comedy is in a more lamentable situation; for, not only its object is the ridiculous, which, though in reality always the same, is so dependant on custom, as to change its appearance with time, and with place; but the art of a comick writer is, to lay hold of that species of the ridiculous which will catch the spectators of the present hour, without regard to futurity. But, though comedy has attained its end, and diverted the pit, for which it was written; if it goes down to posterity, it is a new world, where it is no longer known; it becomes there quite a foreigner, because there are no longer the same originals, nor the same species of the ridiculous, nor

the same spectators, but a set of merciless readers, who complain that they are tired with it, though it once filled Athens, Rome, or Paris, with merriment. This position is general, and comprises all poets and all ages. To say all, at once, comedy is the slave of its subject, and of the reigning taste; tragedy is not subject to the same degree of slavery, because the ends of the two species of poetry are different. For this reason, if we suppose that in all ages there are criticks, who measure every thing by the same rule, it will follow, that if the comedy of Aristophanes be become obsolete, that of Menander, likewise, after having delighted Athens, and revived again at Rome, at last suffered by the force of time. The muse of Molière has almost made both of them forgotten, and would still be walking the stage, if the desire of novelty did not in time make us weary of that which we have too frequently admired.

Those, who have endeavoured to render their judgment independent upon manners and customs, and of such men there have been always some, have not judged so severely either of times, or of writers; they have discovered that a certain resemblance runs through all polished ages, which are alike in essential things, and differ only in external manners, which, if we except religion, are things of indifference; that, wherever there is genius, politeness, liberty, or plenty, there prevails an exact and delicate taste, which, however hard to be expressed, is felt by those that were born to feel it; that Athens, the inventress of all the arts, the mother first of the Roman, and then

of general taste, did not consist of stupid savages; that the Athenian and Augustan ages having always been considered as times that enjoyed a particular privilege of excellence, though we may distinguish the good authors from the bad, as in our own days, yet we ought to suspend the vehemence of criticism, and proceed with caution and timidity, before we pass sentence upon times and writers, whose good taste has been universally applauded. This obvious consideration has disposed them to pause; they have endeavoured to discover the original of taste, and have found that there is not only a stable and immutable beauty, as there is a common understanding in all times and places, which is never obsolete; but there is another kind of beauty, such as we are now treating, which depends upon times and places, and is, therefore, changeable. Such is the imperfection of every thing below, that one mode of beauty is never found without a mixture of the other, and from these two, blended together, results what is called the taste of an age. I am now speaking of an age sprightly and polite, an age which leaves works for a long time behind it, an age which is imitated or criticised, when revolutions have thrown it out of sight.

Upon this incontestable principle, which supposes a beauty, universal and absolute, and a beauty, likewise, relative and particular, which are mingled through one work in very different proportions, it is easy to give an account of the contrary judgments passed on Aristophanes. If we consider him

only with respect to the beauties, which, though they do not please us, delighted the Athenians, we shall condemn him at once, though even this sort of beauty may, sometimes, have its original in universal beauty carried to extravagance. Instead of commending him for being able to give merriment to the most refined nation of those days, we shall proceed to place that people, with all their atticism, in the rank of savages, whom we take upon us to degrade, because they have no other qualifications but innocence, and plain understanding. But have not we, likewise, amidst our more polished manners, beauties merely fashionable, which make part of our writings as of the writings of former times; beauties of which our self-love now makes us fond, but which, perhaps, will disgust our grandsons? Let us be more equitable; let us leave this relative beauty to its real value, more or less, in every age: or, if we must pass judgment upon it, let us say that these touches in Aristophanes, Menander, and Molière, were well struck off in their own time; but that, comparing them with true beauty, that part of Aristophanes was a colouring too strong, that of Menander was too weak, and that of Molière was a peculiar varnish, formed of one and the other, which, without being an imitation, is itself inimitable, yet depending upon time, which will efface it, by degrees, as our notions, which are every day changing, shall receive a sensible alteration. Much of this has already happened since the time of Mo-

lière, who, if he was now to come again, must take a new road.

With respect to unalterable beauties, of which comedy admits much fewer than tragedy, when they are the subject of our consideration, we must not, too easily, set Aristophanes and Plautus below Menander and Terence. We may properly hesitate with Boileau, whether we shall prefer the French comedy to the Greek and Latin. Let us only give, like him, the great rule for pleasing in all ages, and the key by which all the difficulties in passing judgment may be opened. This rule and this key are nothing else but the ultimate design of the comedy.

> Etudiez la cour, et connoissez la ville:
> L'une et l'autre est toujours en modèles fertile.
> C'est par-là que Molière illustrant ses écritis
> Peut-être de son art eût remporté le prix,
> Si, moins ami du peuple en ses doctes peintures,
> Il n'eût point fait souvent grimacer ses figures,
> Quitté pour le bouffon l'agréable et le fin,
> Et sans honte à Térence allié Tabarin[e].

In truth, Aristophanes and Plautus united buffoonery and delicacy, in a greater degree than Molière; and for this they may be blamed. That which then pleased at Athens, and at Rome, was a transitory beauty, which had not sufficient foundation in truth, and, therefore, the taste changed. But, if we condemn those ages for this, what age shall we spare? Let us refer every thing to permanent and universal taste, and we shall find in Aristophanes at least as much to commend as censure.

[e] Boileau, Art. Poét. chant, 3.

12. TRAGEDY MORE UNIFORM THAN COMEDY.

But before we go on to his works, it may be allowed to make some reflections upon tragedy and comedy. Tragedy, though different, according to the difference of times and writers, is uniform in its nature, being founded upon the passions, which never change. With comedy it is otherwise. Whatever difference there is between Eschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides; between Corneille and Racine; between the French and the Greeks; it will not be found sufficient to constitute more than one species of tragedy.

The works of those great masters are, in some respects, like the seanymphs, of whom Ovid says, "That their faces were not the same, yet so much alike, that they might be known to be sisters;"

——— facies non omnibus una,
Nec diversa tamen, qualem decet esse sororum.

The reason is, that the same passions give action and animation to them all. With respect to the comedies of Aristophanes and Plautus, Menander and Terence, Molière and his imitators, if we compare them one with another, we shall find something of a family likeness, but much less strongly marked, on account of the different appearance which ridicule and pleasantry take from the different manners of every age. They will not pass for sisters, but for very distant relations. The Muse of Aristophanes and Plautus, to speak of her with justice, is a bacchanal at least, whose malignant tongue is dipped in gall,

or in poison dangerous as that of the aspick or viper; but whose bursts of malice, and sallies of wit, often give a blow where it is not expected. The Muse of Terence, and, consequently, of Menander, is an artless and unpainted beauty, of easy gaiety, whose features are rather delicate than striking, rather soft than strong, rather plain and modest than great and haughty, but always perfectly natural:

> Ce n'est pas un portrait, une image semblable:
> C'est un fils, un amant, un père vèritable.

The Muse of Molière is not always plainly dressed, but takes airs of quality, and rises above her original condition, so as to attire herself gracefully in magnificent apparel. In her manners she mingles elegance with foolery, force with delicacy and grandeur, or even haughtiness with plainness and modesty. If, sometimes, to please the people, she gives a loose to farce, it is only the gay folly of a moment, from which she immediately returns, and which lasts no longer than a slight intoxication. The first might be painted encircled with little satyrs, some grossly foolish, the others delicate, but all extremely licentious and malignant; monkeys always ready to laugh in your face, and to point out to indiscriminate ridicule, the good and the bad. The second may be shown encircled with geniuses full of softness and of candour, taught to please by nature alone, and whose honeyed dialect is so much the more insinuating, as there is no temptation to distrust it. The last must be accompanied with the delicate laughter

of the court, and that of the city somewhat more coarse, and neither the one nor the other can be separated from her. The Muse of Aristophanes and of Plautus can never be denied the honour of sprightliness, animation, and invention; nor that of Menander and Terence the praise of nature and of delicacy; to that of Molière must be allowed the happy secret of uniting all the piquancy of the former, with a peculiar art which they did not know. Of these three sorts of merit, let us show to each the justice that is due, let us, in each, separate the pure and the true, from the false gold, without approving or condemning either the one or the other, in the gross. If we must pronounce, in general, upon the taste of their writings, we must indisputably allow that Menander, Terence and Molière, will give most pleasure to a decent audience, and, consequently, that they approach nearer to the true beauty, and have less mixture of beauties purely relative, than Plautus and Aristophanes.

If we distinguish comedy by its subjects, we shall find three sorts among the Greeks, and as many among the Latins, all differently dressed; if we distinguish it by ages and authors, we shall again find three sorts; and we shall find three sorts, a third time, if we regard more closely the subject. As the ultimate and general rules of all these sorts of comedy are the same, it will, perhaps, be agreeable to our purpose to sketch them out, before we give a full display of the last class. I can do nothing bet-

ter, on this occasion, than transcribe the twenty-fifth reflection of Rapin upon poetry in particular.

13. GENERAL RULES OF COMEDY

"Comedy," says he[f], "is a representation of common life: its end is to show the faults of particular characters on the stage, to correct the disorder of the people by the fear of ridicule. Thus ridicule is the essential part of a comedy. Ridicule may be in words, or in things; it may be decent, or grotesque. To find what is ridiculous in every thing, is the gift merely of nature; for all the actions of life have their bright, and their dark sides; something serious, and something merry. But Aristotle, who has given rules for drawing tears, has given none for raising laughter; for this is merely the work of nature, and must proceed from genius, with very little help from art or matter. The Spaniards have a turn to find the ridicule in things, much more than we; and the Italians, who are natural comedians, have a better turn for expressing it; their language is more proper for it than ours, by an air of drollery which it can put on, and of which ours may become capable, when it shall be brought nearer to perfection. In short, that agreeable turn, that gaiety, which yet maintains the delicacy of its character, without falling into dulness or into buffoonery; that elegant raillery, which is the flower of fine wit, is the qualification which comedy requires. We must, however, remember that the true

[f] Reflexions sur la poét. p. 154. Paris, 1684.

artificial ridicule, which is required on the theatre, must be only a transcript of the ridicule which nature affords. Comedy is naturally written, when, being on the theatre, a man can fancy himself in a private family, or a particular part of the town, and meets with nothing but what he really meets with in the world; for it is no real comedy in which a man does not see his own picture, and find his own manners, and those of the people among whom he lives. Menander succeeded only by this art among the Greeks: and the Romans, when they sat at Terence's comedies, imagined themselves in a private party; for they found nothing there which they had not been used to find in common company. The great art of comedy is to adhere to nature, without deviation; to have general sentiments and expressions, which all the world can understand; for the writer must keep it always in his mind, that the coarsest touches after nature will please more, than the most delicate, with which nature is inconsistent. However, low and mean words should never be allowed upon the stage, if they are not supported with some kind of wit. Proverbs and vulgar smartnesses can never be suffered, unless they have something in them of nature and pleasantry. This is the universal principle of comedy; whatever is represented, in this manner must please, and nothing can ever please without it. It is by application to the study of nature alone, that we arrive at probability, which is the only infallible guide to theatrical success: without this probability, every thing is

defective, and that which has it, is beautiful; he that follows this, can never go wrong; and the most common faults of comedy proceed from the neglect of propriety, and the precipitation of incidents. Care must, likewise, be taken, that the hints, made use of to introduce the incidents, are not too strong, that the spectator may enjoy the pleasure of finding out their meaning; but commonly the weak place in our comedy is the untying of the plot, in which we almost always fail, on account of the difficulty which there is in disentangling of what has been perplexed. To perplex an intrigue is easy; the imagination does it by itself; but it must be disentangled merely by the judgment, and is, therefore, seldom done happily; and he that reflects a very little, will find, that most comedies are faulty by an unnatural catastrophe. It remains to be examined, whether comedy will allow pictures larger than the life, that this strength of the strokes may make a deeper impression upon the mind of the spectators; that is, if a poet may make a covetous man more covetous, and a peevish man more impertinent, and more troublesome than he really is. To which I answer, that this was the practice of Plautus, whose aim was to please the people, but that Terence, who wrote for gentlemen, confined himself within the compass of nature, and represented vice without addition or aggravation. However, these extravagant characters, such as the Citizen turned gentleman, and the Hypochrondriac patient of Molière, have lately succeeded at court,

where delicacy is carried so far; but every thing, even to provincial interludes, is well received, if it has but merriment, for we had rather laugh than admire. These are the most important rules of comedy.

14. THREE SORTS OF COMEDY

These rules, indeed, are common to the three kinds which I have in my mind; but it is necessary to distinguish each from the rest, which may be done by diversity of matter, which always makes some diversity of management. The old and middle comedy simply represented real adventures: in the same way some passages of history and of fable might form a class of comedies, which should resemble it without having its faults; such is the Amphitryon. How many moral tales, how many adventures, ancient and modern; how many little fables of Æsop, of Phædrus, of Fontaine, or some other ancient poet, would make pretty exhibitions, if they were all made use of as materials by skilful hands? And have we not seen some like Timon the man hater, that have been successful in this way? This sort chiefly regards the Italians. The ancient exhibition, called a satire, because the satyrs played their part in it, of which we have no other instance than the Cyclops of Euripides, has, without doubt, given occasion to the pastoral comedies, for which we are chiefly indebted to Italy, and which are there more cultivated than in France. It is, however, a kind of exhibition that would have its charms, if it was touched with elegance and with-

out meanness: it is the pastoral put into action. To conclude, the new comedy, invented by Menander, has produced the comedy, properly so called in our times. This is that which has for its subject general pictures of common life, and feigned names and adventures, whether of the court or of the city. This third kind is incontestably the most noble, and has received the strongest sanction from custom. It is, likewise, the most difficult to perform, because it is merely the work of invention, in which the poet has no help from real passages or persons, which the tragick poet always makes use of. Who knows but, by deep thinking, another kind of comedy may be invented, wholly different from the three which I have mentioned? such is the fruitfulness of comedy. But its course is already too wide for the discovery of new fields to be wished; and on ground where we are already so apt to stumble, nothing is so dangerous as novelty imperfectly understood. This is the rock on which men have often split, in every kind of pursuit; to go no further, in that of grammar and language, it is better to endeavour after novelty, in the manner of expressing common things, than to hunt for ideas out of the way, in which many a man loses himself. The ill success of that odd composition, tragick comedy, a monster wholly unknown to antiquity[g], sufficiently shows the danger of novelty in attempts like these.

[g] See note to preface to Shakespeare in this volume, vol. xi, p. 325.

15. WHETHER TRAGEDY OR COMEDY BE THE HARDER TO WRITE[h]

To finish the parallel of the two dramas, a question may be revived equally common and important, which has been oftener proposed than well decided: it is, whether comedy or tragedy be most easy or difficult to be well executed. I shall not have the temerity to determine, postively, a question which so many great geniuses have been afraid to decide; but, if it be allowed to every literary man to give his reason for and against a mere work of genius, considered without respect to its good or bad tendency, I shall, in a few words, give my opinion, drawn from the nature of the two works, and the qualifications they demand. Horace[i] proposes a question nearly of the same kind: "It has been inquired, whether a good poem be the work of art or nature? for my part, I do not see much to be done by art without genius, nor by genius without knowledge. The one is necessary to the other, and the success depends upon their cooperation." If we should endeavour to accommodate matters in imitation of this decision of Horace, it were easy to say, at once, that supposing two geniuses equal, one tragick and the other comick, supposing the art, likewise, equal in each, one would be as easy or difficult as the other; but this, though satisfactory in the simple question put by Horace, will not be sufficient here. Nobody can doubt but genius and industry contribute their

[h] See this subject treated with reference to Shakespeare in preface to Shakespeare, and notes.

[i] Ar. Poet. v. 407.

part to every thing valuable, and particularly to good poetry. But if genius and study were to be weighed one against the other, in order to discover which must contribute most to a good work, the question would become more curious, and, perhaps, very difficult of solution. Indeed, though nature must have a great part of the expanse of poetry, yet no poetry lasts long that is not very correct: the balance, therefore, seems to incline in favour of correction. For is it not known that Virgil, with less genius than Ovid, is yet valued more by men of exquisite judgment; or, without going so far, Boileau, the Horace of our time, who composed with so much labour, and asked Molière where he found his rhyme so easily, has said; "If I write four words, I shall blot out three:" has not Boileau, by his polished lines, retouched and retouched a thousand times, gained the preference above the works of the same Molière, which are so natural, and produced by so fruitful a genius! Horace was of that opinion, for when he is teaching the writers of his age the art of poetry, he tells them, in plain terms, that Rome would excel in writing as in arms, if the poets were not afraid of the labour, patience, and time required to polish their pieces. He thought every poem was bad that had not been brought ten times back to the anvil, and required that a work should be kept nine years, as a child is nine months in the womb of its mother, to restrain that natural impatience which combines with sloth and self-love to

disguise faults: so certain is it that correction is the touchstone of writing.

The question proposed comes back to the comparison which I have been making between genius and correction, since we are now engaged in inquiring, whether there is more or less difficulty in writing tragedy or comedy: for, as we must compare nature and study one with another, since they must both concur, more or less, to make a poet; so if we will compare the labours of two different minds in different kinds of writing, we must, with regard to the authors, compare the force of genius, and, with respect to the composition, the difficulties of the task.

The genius of the tragick and comick writer will be easily allowed to be remote from each other. Every performance, be what it will, requires a turn of mind which a man cannot confer upon himself; it is purely the gift of nature, which determines those who have it to pursue, almost in spite of themselves, the taste which predominates in their minds. Pascal found in his childhood, that he was a mathematician; and Vandyke, that he was born a painter. Sometimes this internal direction of the mind does not make such evident discoveries of itself; but it is rare to find Corneilles, who have lived long without knowing that they were poets. Corneille, having once got some notion of his powers, tried a long time, on all sides, to know what particular direction he should take. He had first made an attempt in comedy, in an age when it was yet so gross in

France, that it could give no pleasure to polite persons. Melite was so well received, when he dressed her out, that she gave rise to a new species of comedy and comedians. This success, which encouraged Corneille to pursue that sort of comedy, of which he was the first inventor, left him no reason to imagine, that he was one day to produce those masterpieces of tragedy, which his muse displayed afterwards with so much splendour; and yet less did he imagine, that his comick pieces, which, for want of any that were preferable, were then very much in fashion, would be eclipsed by another genius[j] formed upon the Greeks and Romans, and who would add to their excellencies improvements of his own, and that this modish comedy, to which Corneille, as to his idol, dedicated his labours, would quickly be forgot. He wrote first Medea, and afterwards the Cid; and, by that prodigious flight of his genius, he discovered, though late, that nature had formed him to run in no other course but that of Sophocles. Happy genius! that, without rule or imitation, could at once take so high a flight: having once, as I may say, made himself an eagle, he never afterwards quitted the path which he had worked out for himself, over the heads of the writers of his time; yet he retained some traces of the false taste which infected the whole nation; but even in this, he deserves our admiration, since, in time, he changed it completely by the reflections he made, and those he occasioned. In short, Corneille was born for

[j] Molière.

tragedy, as Molière for comedy. Molière, indeed, knew his own genius sooner, and was not less happy in procuring applause, though it often happened to him as to Corneille,

> " L'ignorance et l'erreur à ses naissantes pièces,
> En habit de marquis, en robes de comtesses,
> Vinssent pour diffamer son chef-d'œuvre nouveau,
> Et secouer la tête à l'endroit le plus beau."

But, without taking any farther notice of the time at which either came to the knowledge of his own genius, let us suppose that the powers of tragedy and comedy were as equally shared between Molière and Corneille, as they are different in their own nature, and then nothing more will remain, than to compare the several difficulties of each composition, and to rate those difficulties together which are common to both.

It appears, first, that the tragick poet has, in his subject, an advantage over the comick, for he takes it from history; and his rival, at least in the more elevated and splendid comedy, is obliged to form it by his own invention. Now, it is not so easy, as it might seem, to find comick subjects capable of a new and pleasing form; but history is a source, if not inexhaustible, yet certainly so copious as never to leave the genius aground. It is true, that invention seems to have a wider field than history: real facts are limited in their number, but the facts which may be feigned have no end; but though, in this respect, invention may be allowed to have the advantage, is the difficulty of inventing to be accounted

as nothing? To make a tragedy, is to get materials together, and to make use of them like a skilful architect; but to make a comedy, is to build like Æsop in the air. It is in vain to boast that the compass of invention is as wide as the extent of desire; every thing is limited, and the mind of man like every thing else. Besides, invention must be in conformity to nature; but distinct and remarkable characters are very rare in nature herself. Molière has got hold on the principal touches of ridicule. If any man should bring characters less strong, he will be in danger of dulness. Where comedy is to be kept up by subordinate personages, it is in great danger. All the force of a picture must arise from the principal persons, and not from the multitude clustered up together. In the same manner, a comedy, to be good, must be supported by a single striking character, and not by under-parts.

But, on the contrary, tragick characters are without number, though of them the general outlines are limited; but dissimulation, jealousy, policy, ambition, desire of dominion, and other interests and passions, are various without end, and take a thousand different forms in different situations of history; so that, as long as there is tragedy, there may be always novelty. Thus the jealous and dissembling Mithridates, so happily painted by Racine, will not stand in the way of a poet, who shall attempt a jealous and dissembling Tiberius. The stormy violence of an Achilles will always leave room for the stormy violence of Alexander.

But the case is very different with avarice, trifling vanity, hypocrisy, and other vices, considered as ridiculous. It would be safer to double and treble all the tragedies of our greatest poets, and use all their subjects over and over, as has been done with Œdipus and Sophonisba, than to bring again upon the stage, in five acts, a Miser, a Citizen turned gentleman, a Tartuffe, and other subjects sufficiently known. Not that these popular vices are less capable of diversification, or are less varied by different circumstances, than the vices and passions of heroes; but that if they were to be brought over again in comedies, they would be less distinct, less exact, less forcible, and, consequently, less applauded. Pleasantry and ridicule must be more strongly marked than heroism and pathos, which support themselves by their own force. Besides, though these two things, of so different natures, could support themselves equally in equal variety, which is very far from being the case, yet comedy, as it now stands, consists not in incidents, but in characters. Now it is by incidents only that characters are diversified, as well upon the stage of comedy, as upon the stage of life. Comedy, as Molière has left it, resembles the pictures of manners drawn by the celebrated La Bruyère. Would any man, after him, venture to draw them over again, he would expose himself to the fate of those who have ventured to continue them. For instance, what could we add to his character of the absent man ? Shall we put him in other circumstances ? The principal strokes of

absence of mind will always be the same; and there are only those striking touches which are fit for a comedy, of which, the end is painting after nature, but with strength and sprightliness, like the designs of Callot. If comedy were among us what it is in Spain, a kind of romance, consisting of many circumstances and intrigues, perplexed and disentangled, so as to surprise; if it was nearly the same with that which Corneille practised in his time; if, like that of Terence, it went no farther than to draw the common portraits of simple nature, and show us fathers, sons, and rivals; notwithstanding the uniformity, which would always prevail, as in the plays of Terence, and, probably, in those of Menander, whom he imitated in his four first pieces, there would always be a resource found, either in variety of incidents, like those of the Spaniards, or in the repetition of the same characters, in the way of Terence; but the case is now very different, the publick calls for new characters, and nothing else. Multiplicity of accidents, and the laborious contrivance of an intrigue, are not now allowed to shelter a weak genius, that would find great conveniencies in that way of writing. Nor does it suit the taste of comedy, which requires an air less constrained, and such freedom and ease of manners as admits nothing of the romantick. She leaves all the pomp of sudden events to the novels, or little romances, which were the diversion of the last age. She allows nothing but a succession of characters resembling nature, and falling in, without any apparent contriv-

ance. Racine has, likewise, taught us to give to tragedy the same simplicity of air and action; he has endeavoured to disentangle it from that great number of incidents, which made it rather a study than diversion to the audience, and which show the poet not so much to abound in invention, as to be deficient in taste. But, notwithstanding all that he has done, or that we can do, to make it simple, it will always have the advantage over comedy in the number of its subjects, because it admits more variety of situations and events, which give variety and novelty to the characters. A miser, copied after nature, will always be the miser of Plautus or Molière; but a Nero, or a prince like Nero, will not always be the hero of Racine. Comedy admits of so little intrigue, that the miser cannot be shown in any such position as will make his picture new; but the great events of tragedy may put Nero in such circumstances, as to make him wholly another character.

But, in the second place, over and above the subjects, may we not say something concerning the final purpose of comedy and tragedy ? The purpose of the one is to divert, and the other to move; and, of these two, which is the easier ? To go to the bottom of those purposes; to move is to strike those strings of the heart which are most natural, terrour and pity; to divert is to make one laugh, a thing which, indeed, is natural enough, but more delicate. The gentleman and the rustick have both sensibility and tenderness of heart, perhaps, in greater or less

degree; but as they are men alike, the heart is moved by the same touches. They both love, likewise, to send their thoughts abroad, and to expand themselves in merriment; but the springs which must be touched for this purpose are not the same in the gentleman as in the rustick. The passions depend on nature, and merriment upon education. The clown will laugh at a waggery, and the gentleman only at a stroke of delicate conceit. The spectators of a tragedy, if they have but a little knowledge, are almost all on a level; but with respect to comedy we have three classes, if not more, the people, the learned, and the court. If there are certain cases in which all may be comprehended in the term people, this is not one of those cases. Whatever father Rapin may say about it, we are more willing even to admire than to laugh. Every man, that has any power of distinction, laughs as rarely as the philosopher admires; for we are not to reckon those fits of laughter which are not incited by nature, and which are given merely to complaisance, to respect, flattery, and good-humour; such as break out at sayings which pretend to smartness in assemblies. The laughter of the theatre is of another stamp. Every reader and spectator judges of wit by his own standard, and measures it by his capacity, or by his condition: the different capacities and conditions of men make them diverted on very different occasions. If, therefore, we consider the end of the tragick and comick poet, the comedian must be involved in much more difficulties, without taking in the obstructions

to be encountered equally by both, in an art which consists in raising the passions, or the mirth of a great multitude. The tragedian has little to do but to reflect upon his own thought, and draw from his heart those sentiments which will certainly make their way to the hearts of others, if he found them in his own. The other must take many forms, and change himself almost into as many persons, as he undertakes to satisfy and divert.

It may be said, that, if genius be supposed equal, and success supposed to depend upon genius, the business will be equally easy and difficult to one author and to the other. This objection is of no weight; for the same question still recurs, which is, whether of these two kinds of genius is more valuable, or more rare? If we proceed by example, and not by reasoning, we shall decide, I think, in favour of comedy.

It may be said, that, if merely art be considered, it will require deeper thoughts to form a plan just and simple; to produce happy surprises, without apparent contrivance; to carry a passion skilfully through its gradations to its height; to arrive happily to the end by always moving from it, as Ithaca seemed to fly Ulysses; to unite the acts and scenes; and to raise, by insensible degrees, a striking edifice, of which the least merit shall be exactness of proportion. It may be added, that in comedy this art is infinitely less, for there the characters come upon the stage with very little artifice or plot; the whole scheme is so connected that we see it at once, and

the plan and disposition of the parts make a small part of its excellence, in comparison of a gloss of pleasantry diffused over each scene, which is more the happy effect of a lucky moment, than of long consideration.

These objections, and many others, which so fruitful a subject might easily suggest, it is not difficult to refute; and, if we were to judge by the impression made on the mind by tragedies and comedies of equal excellence, perhaps, when we examine those impressions, it will be found that a sally of pleasantry, which diverts all the world, required more thought than a passage which gave the highest pleasure in tragedy; and, to this determination we shall be more inclined, when a closer examination shall show us, that a happy vein of tragedy is opened and effused at less expense, than a well-placed witticism in comedy has required, merely to assign its place.

It would be too much to dwell long upon such a digression; and, as I have no business to decide the question, I leave both that and my arguments to the taste of each particular reader, who will find what is to be said for or against it. My purpose was only to say of comedy, considered as a work of genius, all that a man of letters can be supposed to deliver without departing from his character, and, without palliating, in any degree, the corrupt use which has been almost always made of an exhibition, which, in its nature, might be innocent; but has been vicious from the time that it has been infected with

the wickedness of men. It is not for publick exhibitions that I am now writing, but for literary inquiries. The stage is too much frequented, and books too much neglected: yet it is to the literature of Greece and Rome that we are indebted for that valuable taste, which will be insensibly lost, by the affected negligence, which now prevails, of having recourse to originals. If reason has been a considerable gainer, it must be confessed that taste has been somewhat a loser.

To return to Aristophanes. So many great men of antiquity, through a long succession of ages, down to our times, have set a value upon his works, that we cannot, naturally, suppose them contemptible, notwithstanding the essential faults with which he may be justly reproached. It is sufficient to say, that he was esteemed by Plato and Cicero; and, to conclude, by that which does him most honour, but, still, falls short of justification, the strong and sprightly eloquence of St. Chrysostom drew its support from the masculine and vigorous atticism of this sarcastick comedian, to whom the father paid the same regard as Alexander to Homer, that of putting his works under his pillow, that he might read them, at night, before he slept, and, in the morning, as soon as he awaked.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

1. SUMMARY OF THE FOUR ARTICLES TREATED OF IN THIS DISCOURSE

THUS I have given a faithful extract of the remains of Aristophanes. That I have not shown them in their true form, I am not afraid that any body will complain. I have given an account of every thing, as far as it was consistent with moral decency. No pen, however cynical or heathenish, would venture to produce, in open day, the horrid passages which I have put out of sight; and, instead of regretting any part that I have suppressed, the very suppression will easily show to what degree the Athenians were infected with licentiousness of imagination, and corruption of principles. If the taste of antiquity allows us to preserve what time and barbarity have hitherto spared, religion and virtue at least oblige us not to spread it before the eyes of mankind. To end this work in an useful manner, let us examine, in a few words, the four particulars which are most striking in the eleven pieces of Aristophanes.

2. CHARACTER OF ANCIENT COMEDY

The first is the character of the ancient comedy, which has no likeness to any thing in nature. Its genius is so wild and strange, that it scarce admits a definition. In what class of comedy must we place it? It appears, to me, to be a species of writing by itself. If we had Phrynicus, Plato, Eupolis, Cratinus, Ameipsias, and so many other celebrated rivals of Aristophanes, of whom all that we can

find are a few fragments scattered in Plutarch, Athenæus, and Suidas, we might compare them with our poet, settle the general scheme, observe the minuter differences, and form a complete notion of their comick stage. But, for want of all this, we can fix only on Aristophanes; and it is true that he may be, in some measure, sufficient to furnish a tolerable judgment of the old comedy; for, if we believe him, and who can be better credited? he was the most daring of all his brethren, the poets, who practised the same kind of writing. Upon this supposition we may conclude, that the comedy of those days consisted in an allegory drawn out and continued; an allegory never very regular, but often ingenious, and almost always carried beyond strict propriety; of satire keen and biting, but diversified, sprightly, and unexpected; so that the wound was given before it was perceived. Their points of satire were thunderbolts, and their wild figures, with their variety and quickness, had the effect of lightning. Their imitation was carried even to resemblance of persons, and their common entertainments were a parody of rival poets joined, if I may so express it, with a parody of manners and habits.

But it would be tedious to draw out to the reader that which he will already have perceived better than myself. I have no design to anticipate his reflections; and, therefore, shall only sketch the picture, which he must finish by himself: he will pursue the subject farther, and form to himself a view of the common and domestick life of the

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Athenians, of which this kind of comedy was a picture, with some aggravation of the features: he will bring within his view all the customs, manners, and vices, and the whole character of the people of Athens. By bringing all these together he will fix in his mind an indelible idea of a people, in whom so many contrarieties were united, and who, in a manner that can scarce be expressed, connected nobility with the cast of Athens, wisdom with madness, rage for novelty with a bigotry for antiquity, the politeness of a monarchy with the roughness of a republick, refinement with coarseness, independence with slavery, haughtiness with servile compliance, severity of manners with debauchery, a kind of irreligion with piety. We shall do this in reading; as, in travelling through different nations, we make ourselves masters of their characters by combining their different appearances, and reflecting upon what we see.

3. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ATHENIANS

The government of Athens makes a fine part of the ancient comedy. In most states the mystery of government is confined within the walls of the cabinets; even in commonwealths it does not pass but through five or six heads, who rule those that think themselves the rulers. Oratory dares not touch it, and comedy still less. Cicero himself did not speak freely upon so nice a subject as the Roman commonwealth; but the Athenian eloquence was informed of the whole secret, and searches the re-

cesses of the human mind, to fetch it out and expose it to the people. Demosthenes, and his contemporaries, speak with a freedom at which we are astonished, notwithstanding the notion we have of a popular government; yet, at what time but this did comedy adventure to claim the same rights with civil eloquence? The Italian comedy of the last age, all daring as it was, could, for its boldness, come into no competition with the ancient. It was limited to general satire, which was sometimes carried so far, that the malignity was overlooked in an attention to the wild exaggeration, the unexpected strokes, the pungent wit, and the malignity concealed under such wild flights as became the character of harlequin. But though it so far resembled Aristophanes, our age is yet at a great distance from his, and the Italian comedy from his scenes. But with respect to the liberty of censuring the government, there can be no comparison made of one age or comedy with another. Aristophanes is the only writer of his kind, and is, for that reason, of the highest value. A powerful state, set at the head of Greece, is the subject of his merriment, and that merriment is allowed by the state itself. This appears to us an inconsistency; but it is true that it was the interest of the state to allow it, though not always without inconveniency. It was a restraint upon the ambition and tyranny of single men, a matter of great importance to a people so very jealous of their liberty. Cleon, Alcibiades, Lamachus, and many other generals and magistrates

were kept under by fear of the comick strokes of a poet so little cautious as Aristophanes. He was once, indeed, in danger of paying dear for his wit. He professed, as he tells us himself, to be of great use by his writings to the state; and rated his merit so high as to complain that he was not rewarded. But, under pretence of this publick spirit, he spared no part of the publick conduct; neither was government, councils, revenues, popular assemblies, secret proceedings in judicature, choice of ministers, the government of the nobles, or that of the people, spared.

The Acharnians, the Peace, and the Birds, are eternal monuments of the boldness of the poet, who was not afraid of censuring the government for the obstinate continuance of a ruinous war, for undertaking new ones, and feeding itself with wild imaginations, and running to destruction, as it did, for an idle point of honour.

Nothing can be more reproachful to the Athenians than his play of the Knights, where he represents, under an allegory, that may be easily seen through, the nation of the Athenians, as an old doting fellow tricked by a new man, such as Cleon and his companions, who were of the same stamp.

A single glance upon Lysistrata, and the Female Orators, must raise astonishment, when the Athenian policy is set below the schemes of women, whom the author makes ridiculous, for no other reason than, to bring contempt upon their husbands, who held the helm of government.

The Wasps is written to expose the madness of the people for lawsuits and litigations; and a multitude of iniquities are laid open.

It may easily be gathered, that, notwithstanding the wise laws of Solon, which they still professed to follow, the government was falling into decay, for we are not to understand the jest of Aristophanes in the literal sense. It is plain that the corruption, though we should suppose it but half as much as we are told, was very great, for it ended in the destruction of Athens, which could scarce raise its head again, after it had been taken by Lysander. Though we consider Aristophanes, as a comick writer who deals in exaggeration, and bring down his stories to their true standard, we still find that the fundamentals of their government fail in almost all the essential points. That the people were inveigled by men of ambition; that all councils and decrees had their original in factious combinations; that avarice and private interest animated all their policy to the hurt of the publick; that their revenues were ill managed, their allies improperly treated; that their good citizens were sacrificed, and the bad put in places; that a mad eagerness for judicial litigation took up all their attention within, and that war was made without, not so much with wisdom and precaution, as with temerity and good-luck; that the love of novelty and fashion, in the manner of managing the publick affairs, was a madness universally prevalent; and that, as Melanthius says in Plutarch, the republick of Athens was continued only by the

perpetual discord of those that managed its affairs. This remedied the dishonour by preserving the equilibrium, and was kept always in action by eloquence and comedy.

This is what, in general, may be drawn from the reading of Aristophanes. The sagacity of the readers will go farther; they will compare the different forms of government, by which that tumultuous people endeavoured to regulate or increase the democracy, which forms were all fatal to the state, because they were not built upon lasting foundations, and had all in them the principles of destruction. A strange contrivance it was to perpetuate a state, by changing the just proportion which Solon had wisely settled between the nobles and the people, and by opening a gate to the skilful ambition of those who had art or courage enough to force themselves into the government by means of the people, whom they flattered with protections, that they might more certainly crush them.

4. THE TRAGICK POETS RALLIED

Another part of the works of Aristophanes, are his pleasant reflections upon the most celebrated poets. The shafts which he lets fly at the three heroes of tragedy, and particularly at Euripides, might incline the reader to believe that he had little esteem for those great men, and that, probably, the spectators that applauded him were of his opinion. This conclusion would not be just, as I have already shown by arguments, which, if I had not offered

them, the reader might have discovered better than I. But, that I may leave no room for objections, and prevent any shadow of captiousness, I shall venture to observe, that posterity will not consider Racine as less a master of the French stage, because his plays were ridiculed by parodies. Parody always fixes upon the best pieces, and was more to the taste of the Greeks than to ours. At present, the high theatres give it up to stages of inferiour rank; but in Athens the comick theatre considered parody as its principal ornament, for a reason which is worth examining. The ancient comedy was not, like ours, a remote and delicate imitation; it was the art of gross mimickry, and would have been supposed to have missed its aim, had it not copied the mien, the walk, the dress, the motions of the face of those whom it exhibited. Now parody is an imitation of this kind; it is a change of serious to burlesque, by a slight variation of words, inflection of voice, or an imperceptible art of mimickry. Parody is to poetry, as a masque to a face. As the tragedies of Eschylus, of Sophocles, and of Euripides were much in fashion, and were known by memory to the people, the parodies upon them would naturally strike and please, when they were accompanied by the grimaces of a good comedian, who mimicked with archness a serious character. Such is the malignity of human nature; we love to laugh at those whom we esteem most, and by this make ourselves some recompense for the unwilling homage which we pay to merit. The parodies upon these poets, made by Aris-

tophanes, ought to be considered rather as encomiums than satires. They give us occasion to examine whether the criticisms are just or not in themselves; but, what is more important, they afford no proof that Euripides, or his predecessors, wanted the esteem of Aristophanes or his age. The statues raised to their honour, the respect paid by the Athenians to their writings, and the careful preservation of those writings themselves, are immortal testimonies in their favour, and make it unnecessary for me to stop any longer upon so plausible a solution of so frivolous an objection.

5. FREQUENT RIDICULE OF THE GODS

The most troublesome difficulty, and that which, so far as I know, has not yet been cleared to satisfaction, is the contemptuous manner in which Aristophanes treats the gods. Though I am persuaded, in my own mind, that I have found the true solution of this question, I am not sure that it will make more impression than that of M. Boivin, who contents himself with saying, that every thing was allowed to the comick poets; and that even atheism was permitted to the licentiousness of the stage; that the Athenians applauded all that made them laugh; and believed that Jupiter himself laughed with them at the smart sayings of a poet. Mr. Collier[k], an Englishman, in his remarks upon their stage, attempts to prove that Aristophanes was an

[k] View of the immorality and profaneness of the English stage, by Jeremy Collier. 1698.— Ed.

open atheist. For my part, I am not satisfied with the account either of one or the other, and think it better to venture a new system, of which I have already dropped some hints in this work. The truth is, that the Athenians professed to be great laughers, always ready for merriment on whatever subject. But it cannot be conceived that Aristophanes should, without punishment, publish himself an atheist, unless we suppose that atheism was the opinion, likewise, of the spectators, and of the judges commissioned to examine the plays; and yet this cannot be suspected of those who boasted themselves the most religious nation, and, naturally, the most superstitious of all Greece. How can we suppose those to be atheists who passed sentence upon Diagoras, Socrates, and Alcibiades for impiety! These are glaring inconsistencies. To say, like M. Boivin, for sake of getting clear of the difficulty, that Alcibiades, Socrates, and Diagoras attacked religion seriously, and were, therefore, not allowed, but that Aristophanes did it in jest, or was authorized by custom, would be to trifle with the difficulty, and not to clear it. Though the Athenians loved merriment, it is not likely that, if Aristophanes had professed atheism, they would have spared him more than Socrates, who had as much life and pleasantry in his discourses, as the poet in his comedies. The pungent raillery of Aristophanes, and the fondness of the Athenians for it, are, therefore, not the true reason why the poet was spared, when Socrates was

condemned. I shall now solve the question with great brevity.

The true answer to this question is given by Plutarch in his treatise of reading of the poets. Plutarch attempts to prove, that youth is not to be prohibited the reading of the poets, but to be cautioned against such parts as may have bad effects. They are first to be prepossessed with this leading principle, that poetry is false and fabulous. He then enumerates, at length, the fables which Homer and other poets have invented about their deities, and concludes thus: "When, therefore, there is found in poetical compositions any thing strange and shocking, with respect to gods or demi-gods, or concerning the virtue of any excellent and renowned characters, he that should receive these fictions as truth, would be corrupted by an erroneous opinion; but he that always keeps in his mind the fables and allusions, which it is the business of poetry to contrive, will not be injured by these stories, nor receive any ill impressions upon his thoughts, but will be ready to censure himself, if, at any time, he happens to be afraid, lest Neptune, in his rage, should split the earth, and lay open the infernal regions." Some pages afterwards, he tells us, "that religion is a thing difficult of comprehension, and above the understanding of poets; which it is," says he, "necessary to have in mind when we read their fables."

The pagans, therefore, had their fables, which they distinguished from their religion; for no one can be persuaded that Ovid intended his Metamor-

phoses, as a true representation of the religion of the Romans. The poets were allowed their imaginations about their gods, as things which have no regard to the publick worship. Upon this principle, I say, as I said before, there was, amongst the pagans, two sorts of religion; one a poetical, and the other a real religion; one practical, the other theatrical; a mythology for the poets, a theology for use. They had fables, and a worship, which, though founded upon fable, was yet very different.

Diagoras, Socrates, Plato, and the philosophers of Athens, with Cicero, their admirer, and the other pretended wise men of Rome are men by themselves. These were the atheists with respect to the ancients. We must not, therefore, look into Plato, or into Cicero, for the real religion of the pagans, as distinct from the fabulous. These two authors involve themselves in the clouds, that their opinions may not be discovered. They durst not openly attack the real religion; but destroyed it by attacking fable.

To distinguish here, with exactness, the agreement or difference between fable and religion, is not, at present, my intention. It is not easy[1] to show, with exactness, what was the Athenian notion of the nature of the gods whom they worshipped. Plutarch himself tells us, that this was a thing very difficult for the philosophers. It is sufficient for me that the mythology and theology of the ancients were different at the bottom; that the names of the

[1] See St. Paul, upon the subject of the Ignoto Deo.

gods continued the same; and that long custom gave up one to the caprices of the poets, without supposing the other affected by them. This being once settled upon the authority of the ancients themselves, I am no longer surprised to see Jupiter, Minerva, Neptune, Bacchus, appear upon the stage in the comedy of Aristophanes, and, at the same time, receiving incense in the temples of Athens. This is, in my opinion, the most reasonable account of a thing so obscure; and I am ready to give up my system to any other, by which the Athenians shall be made more consistent with themselves; those Athenians who sat laughing at the gods of Aristophanes, while they condemned Socrates for having appeared to despise the gods of his country.

6. THE MIMI AND PANTOMIMES

A word is now to be spoken of the *mimi*, which had some relation to comedy. This appellation was, by the Greeks and Romans, given to certain dramatick performances, and to the actors that played them. The denomination sufficiently shows, that their art consisted in imitation and buffoonery. Of their works, nothing, or very little, is remaining; so that they can only be considered, by the help of some passages in authors, from which little is to be learned that deserves consideration. I shall extract the substance, as I did with respect to the chorus, without losing time, by defining all the different species, or producing all the quotations, which would give the reader more trouble than instruction. He

that desires fuller instructions may read Vossius, Valois, Saumaises, and Gataker, of whose compilations, however learned, I should think it shame to be the author.

The mimi had their original from comedy, of which, at its first appearance, they made a part; for their mimick actors always played and exhibited grotesque dances in the comedies. The jealousy of rivalship afterwards broke them off from the comick actors, and made them a company by themselves. But to secure their reception, they borrowed from comedy all its drollery, wildness, grossness, and licentiousness. This amusement they added to their dances, and they produced what are now called farces, or burlettas. These farces had not the regularity or delicacy of comedies; they were only a succession of single scenes, contrived to raise laughter, formed or unravelled without order, and without connexion. They had no other end but to make the people laugh. Now and then there might be good sentences, like the sentences of P. Syrus, that are yet left us, but the groundwork was low comedy, and any thing of greater dignity drops in by chance. We must, however, imagine, that this odd species of the drama rose, at length, to somewhat a higher character, since we are told that Plato, the philosopher, laid the mimi of Sophron under his pillow, and they were found there after his death. But in general we may say, with truth, that it always discovered the meanness of its original, like a false pretension to nobility, in which the cheat is always

discovered, through the concealment of fictitious splendour.

These mimi were of two sorts, of which the length was different, but the purposes the same. The mimi of one species were short; those of the other long, and not quite so grotesque. These two kinds were subdivided into many species, distinguished by the dresses and characters, such as show drunkards, physicians, men, and women.

Thus far of the Greeks. The Romans, having borrowed of them the more noble shows of tragedy and comedy, were not content till they had their rhapsodies. They had their *planipedes*, who played with flat soles, that they might have the more agility; and their *sannions*, whose head was shaved, that they might box the better. There is no need of naming here all who had a name for these diversions among the Greeks and Romans. I have said enough, and, perhaps, too much of this abortion of comedy, which drew upon itself the contempt of good men, the censures of the magistrates, and the indignation of the fathers of the church[m].

Another set of players were called pantomimes: these were, at least, so far preferable to the former, that they gave no offence to the ears. They spoke only to the eyes; but with such art of expression, that, without the utterance of a single word, they represented, as we are told, a complete tragedy

m It is the licentiousness of the mimi and pantomimes, against which the censure of the holy fathers particularly breaks out, as against a thing irregular and indecent, without supposing it much connected with the cause of religion.

or comedy, in the same manner as dumb harlequin is exhibited on our theatres. These pantomimes, among the Greeks, first mingled singing with their dances; afterwards, about the time of Livius Andronicus, the songs were performed by one part, and the dances by another. Afterwards, in the time of Augustus, when they were sent for to Rome, for the diversions of the people, whom he had enslaved, they played comedies without songs or vocal utterance, but by the sprightliness, activity, and efficacy of their gestures; or, as Sidonius Apollinaris expresses it, "clausis faucibus, et loquente gestu." They not only exhibited things and passions, but even the most delicate distinctions of passions, and the slightest circumstances of facts. We must not, however, imagine, at least, in my opinion, that the pantomimes did literally represent regular tragedies or comedies by the mere motions of their bodies. We may justly determine, notwithstanding all their agility, their representations would, at last, be very incomplete: yet we may suppose, with good reason, that their action was very lively, and that the art of imitation went great lengths, since it raised the admiration of the wisest men, and made the people mad with eagerness. Yet, when we read that one Hylas, the pupil of one Pylades, in the time of Augustus, divided the applauses of the people with his master, when they represented Œdipus; or when Juvenal tells us, that Bathillus played Leda, and other things of the same kind, it is not easy to believe that a single man, without speaking a word, could

exhibit tragedies or comedies, and make starts and bounds supply the place of vocal articulation. Notwithstanding the obscurity of this whole matter, one may know what to admit as certain, or how far a representation could be carried by dance, posture and grimace. Among these artificial dances, of which we know nothing but the names, there was, as early as the time of Aristophanes, some extremely indecent. These were continued in Italy from the time of Augustus, long after the emperours. It was a publick mischief, which contributed, in some measure, to the decay and ruin of the Roman empire. To have a due detestation of those licentious entertainments, there is no need of any recourse to the fathers; the wiser pagans tell us, very plainly, what they thought of them. I have made this mention of the mimi and pantomimes, only to show how the most noble of publick spectacles were corrupted and abused, and to conduct the reader to the end through every road, and through all the by-paths of human wit, from Homer and Eschylus to our own time.

7. WANDERINGS OF THE HUMAN MIND IN THE BIRTH, AND PROGRESS OF THEATRICAL REPRESENTATIONS

That we may conclude this work by applying the principles laid down at the beginning, and extended through the whole, I desire the reader to recur to that point, where I have represented the human mind as beginning the course of the drama. The chorus was first a hymn to Bacchus, produced by accident; art brought it to perfection, and delight

made it a publick diversion. Thespis made a single actor play before the people; this was the beginning of theatrical shows. Eschylus, taking the idea of the Iliad and Odyssey, animates, if I may so express it, the epick poem, and gives a dialogue in place of simple recitation; puts the whole into action, and sets it before the eyes, as if it was a present and real transaction; he gives the chorus[n] an interest in the scenes; contrives habits of dignity and theatrical decorations: in a word, he gives both to Tragedy; or, more properly, draws it from the bosom of the epick poem. She made her appearance, sparkling with graces, and displayed such majesty, as gained every heart at the first view. Sophocles considers her more nearly, with the eyes of a critick, and finds that she has something still about her rough and swelling; he divests her of her false ornaments; teaches her a more regular walk, and more familiar dignity. Euripides was of opinion, that she ought to receive still more softness and tenderness; he teaches her the new art of pleasing by simplicity, and gives her the charms of graceful negligence; so that he makes her stand in suspense, whether she appears most to advantage in the dress of Sophocles, sparkling with gems, or in that of Euripides, which is more simple and modest. Both, indeed, are elegant; but the elegance is of different kinds, between which

[n] Eschylus, in my opinion, as well as the other poets, his contemporaries, retained the chorus, not merely because it was the fashion, but because, examining tragedy to the bottom, they found it not rational to conceive, that an action, great and splendid, like the revolution of a state, could pass without witnesses.

no judgment, as yet, has decided the prize of superiority.

We can now trace it no farther; its progress amongst the Greeks is out of sight. We must pass at once to the time of Augustus, when Apollo and the Muses quitted their ancient residence in Greece, to fix their abode in Italy. But it is vain to ask questions of Melpomene; she is obstinately silent, and we only know, from strangers, her power amongst the Romans. Seneca endeavours to make her speak; but the gaudy show, with which he rather loads than adorns her, makes us think, that he took some phantom of Melpomene for the Muse herself.

Another flight, equally rapid with that to Rome, must carry us through thousands of years, from Rome to France. There, in the time of Lewis the fourteenth, we see the mind of man giving birth to tragedy a second time, as if the Greek tragedy had been utterly forgot. In the place of Eschylus, we have our Rotrou; in Corneille, we have another Sophocles; and in Racine, a second Euripides. Thus is tragedy raised from her ashes, carried to the utmost point of greatness, and so dazzling, that she prefers herself to herself. Surprised to see herself produced again in France, in so short a time, and nearly in the same manner as before in Greece, she is disposed to believe that her fate is to make a short transition from her birth to her perfection, like the goddess that issued from the brain of Jupiter.

If we look back on the other side, to the rise of

Comedy, we shall see her hatched from the Margites, or from the Odyssey of Homer, the imitation of her eldest sister; but we see her, under the conduct of Aristophanes, become licentious and petulant, taking airs to herself, which the magistrates were obliged to crush. Menander reduced her to bounds, taught her, at once, gaiety and politeness, and enabled her to correct vice, without shocking the offenders. Plautus, among the Romans, to whom we must now pass, united the earlier and the later comedy, and joined buffoonery with delicacy. Terence, who was better instructed, received comedy from Menander, and surpassed his original, as he endeavoured to copy it. And lastly, Molière produced a new species of comedy, which must be placed in a class by itself, in opposition to that of Aristophanes, whose manner is, likewise, peculiar to himself.

But such is the weakness of the human mind, that, when we review the successions of the drama a third time, we find genius falling from its height, forgetting itself, and led astray by the love of novelty, and the desire of striking out new paths. Tragedy degenerated, in Greece, from the time of Aristotle, and, in Rome, after Augustus. At Rome and Athens, comedy produced mimi, pantomimes, burlettas, tricks, and farces, for the sake of variety; such is the character, and such the madness of the mind of man. It is satisfied with having made great conquests, and gives them up to attempt others which are far from answering its expectation, and

only enable it to discover its own folly, weakness and deviations. But, why should we be tired with standing still at the true point of perfection, when it is attained ? If eloquence be wearied, and forgets herself awhile, yet she soon returns to her former point: so will it happen to our theatres, if the French Muses will keep the Greek models in their view, and not look, with disdain, upon a stage, whose mother is nature, whose soul is passion, and whose art is simplicity: a stage, which, to speak the truth, does not, perhaps, equal ours in splendour and elevation, but which excels it in simplicity and propriety, and equals it, at least, in the conduct and direction of those passions, which may properly affect an honest man and a christian.

For my part, I shall think myself well recompensed for my labour, and shall attain the end which I had in view, if I shall, in some little measure, revive in the minds of those, who purpose to run the round of polite literature, not an immoderate and blind reverence, but a true taste of antiquity: such a taste, as both feeds and polishes the mind, and enriches it, by enabling it to appropriate the wealth of foreigners, and to exert its natural fertility in exquisite productions; such a taste as gave the Racines, the Molières, the Boileaus, the Fontaines, the Patrus, the Pelissons, and many other great geniuses of the last age, all that they were, and all that they will always be; such a taste, as puts the seal of immortality to those works in which it is discovered; a taste, so necessary, that, without it, we

may be certain, that the greatest powers of nature will long continue in a state below themselves; for no man ought to allow himself to be flattered or seduced, by the example of some men of genius, who have rather appeared to despise this taste, than to despise it in reality. It is true, that excellent originals have given occasion, without any fault of their own, to very bad copies. No man ought severely to ape either the ancients or the moderns; but, if it was necessary, to run into an extreme of one side or the other, which is never done by a judicious and well-directed mind, it would be better for a wit, as for a painter, to enrich himself by what he can take from the ancients, than to grow poor by taking all from his own stock; or openly to affect an imitation of those moderns, whose more fertile genius has produced beauties, peculiar to themselves, and which themselves only can display with grace: beauties of that peculiar kind, that they are not fit to be imitated by others; though, in those who first invented them, they may be justly esteemed, and in them only°.

° Much light has been thrown on the Greek drama since the labours of Dr. Johnson, and the pere Brumoy. The papers on the subject, in Cumberland's Observer, Schlegel's Lectures on Dramatic Literature, Mr. Mitchell's Dissertations, in his translation of Aristophanes, and the essays on the Greek Orators and Dramatists, in the Quarterly Review, may be mentioned as among the most popular attempts to illustrate this pleasing department of the Belles-Lettres.— Ed.

Dr. James's Medicinal Dictionary, 3 vols. folio 1743

TO DR. MEAD

SIR,

THAT the Medicinal Dictionary is dedicated to you, is to be imputed only to your reputation for superiour skill in those sciences, which I have endeavoured to explain and facilitate; and you are, therefore, to consider this address, if it be agreeable to you, as one of the rewards of merit; and, if otherwise, as one of the inconveniencies of eminence.

However you shall receive it, my design cannot be disappointed; because this publick appeal to your judgment will show, that I do not found my hopes of approbation upon the ignorance of my readers, and that I fear his censure least, whose knowledge is most extensive.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

R. JAMES.

The Female Quixote. By Mrs. Lennox. 1752

TO THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF MIDDLESEX

MY LORD,

SUCH is the power of interest over almost every mind, that no one is long without arguments to prove any position which is ardently wished to be true, or to justify any measures which are dictated by inclination.

By this subtile sophistry of desire, I have been persuaded to hope that this book may, without impropriety, be inscribed to your lordship; but am

not certain, that my reasons will have the same force upon other understandings.

The dread which a writer feels of the publick censure; the still greater dread of neglect; and the eager wish for support and protection, which is impressed by the consciousness of imbecility, are unknown to those who have never adventured into the world; and, I am afraid, my lord, equally unknown to those who have always found the world ready to applaud them.

It is, therefore, not unlikely that the design of this address may be mistaken, and the effects of my fear imputed to my vanity. They, who see your lordship's name prefixed to my performance, will rather condemn my presumption than compassionate my anxiety.

But, whatever be supposed my motive, the praise of judgment cannot be denied me; for, to whom can timidity so properly fly for shelter, as to him who has been so long distinguished for candour and humanity ? How can vanity be so completely gratified, as by the allowed patronage of him, whose judgment has so long given a standard to the national taste ! Or by what other means could I so powerfully suppress all opposition, but that of envy, as by declaring myself,

My lord,
Your lordship's obliged and
most obedient servant,
THE AUTHOR.

Shakespeare Illustrated; or, the Novels and Histories on which the plays of Shakespeare are founded; collected and translated from the original authors. With Critical Remarks. By the author of the Female Quixote. 1753

TO THE RIGHT HON. JOHN, EARL OF ORRERY

MY LORD,

I HAVE no other pretence to the honour of a patronage so illustrious as that of your lordship, than the merit of attempting what has, by some unaccountable neglect, been hitherto omitted, though absolutely necessary to a perfect knowledge of the abilities of Shakespeare.

Among the powers that most conduce to constitute a poet, the first and most valuable is invention; the highest seems to be that which is able to produce a series of events. It is easy, when the thread of a story is once drawn, to diversify it with variety of colours; and when a train of action is presented to the mind, a little acquaintance with life will supply circumstances and reflections, and a little knowledge of books furnish parallels and illustrations. To tell over again a story that has been told already, and to tell it better than the first author, is no rare qualification: but to strike out the first hints of a new fable; hence, to introduce a set of characters so diversified in their several passions and interests, that from the clashing of this variety may result many necessary incidents; to make these incidents surprising, and yet natural, so as to delight

the imagination, without shocking the judgment of a reader; and, finally, to wind up the whole in a pleasing catastrophe, produced by those very means which seem most likely to oppose and prevent it, is the utmost effort of the human mind.

To discover how few of those writers, who profess to recount imaginary adventures, have been able to produce any thing by their own imagination, would require too much of that time which your lordship employs in nobler studies. Of all the novels and romances that wit or idleness, vanity or indigence, have pushed into the world, there are very few of which the end cannot be conjectured from the beginning; or where the authors have done more than to transpose the incidents of other tales, or strip the circumstances from one event for the decoration of another.

In the examination of a poet's character, it is, therefore, first to be inquired, what degree of invention has been exerted by him. With this view, I have very diligently read the works of Shakespeare, and now presume to lay the result of my researches before your lordship, before that judge whom Pliny himself would have wished for his assessor to hear a literary cause.

How much the translation of the following novels will add to the reputation of Shakespeare, or take away from it, you my lord, and men learned and candid like you, if any such can be found, must now determine. Some danger, I am informed, there is, lest his admirers should think him injured by this

attempt, and clamour, as at the diminution of the honour of that nation, which boasts itself the parent of so great a poet.

That no such enemies may arise against me, though I am unwilling to believe it, I am far from being too confident, for who can fix bounds to bigotry and folly ? My sex, my age, have not given me many opportunities of mingling in the world. There may be in it many a species of absurdity which I have never seen, and, among them, such vanity as pleases itself with false praise bestowed on another, and such superstition as worships idols, without supposing them to be gods.

But the truth is, that a very small part of the reputation of this mighty genius depends upon the naked plot or story of his plays. He lived in an age, when the books of chivalry were yet popular, and when, therefore, the minds of his auditors were not accustomed to balance probabilities, or to examine nicely the proportion between causes and effects. It was sufficient to recommend a story, that it was far removed from common life, that its changes were frequent, and its close pathetick.

This disposition of the age concurred so happily with the imagination of Shakespeare, that he had no desire to reform it; and, indeed, to this he was indebted for the licentious variety, by which he made his plays more entertaining than those of any other author.

He had looked, with great attention, on the scenes of nature; but his chief skill was in human

actions, passions, and habits; he was, therefore, delighted with such tales as afforded numerous incidents, and exhibited many characters in many changes of situation. These characters are so copiously diversified, and some of them so justly pursued, that his works may be considered, as a map of life, a faithful miniature of human transactions; and he that has read Shakespeare, with attention, will, perhaps, find little new in the crowded world.

Among his other excellencies, it ought to be remarked, because it has hitherto been unnoticed, that his heroes are men; that the love and hatred, the hopes and fears of his chief personages, are such as are common to other human beings, and not, like those which later times have exhibited, peculiar to phantoms that strut upon the stage[p].

It is not, perhaps, very necessary to inquire whether the vehicle of so much delight and instruction, be a story probable or unlikely, native or foreign. Shakespeare's excellence is not the fiction of a tale, but the representation of life; and his reputation is, therefore, safe, till human nature shall be changed. Nor can he, who has so many just claims to praise, suffer by losing that which ignorant admiration has unreasonably given him. To calumniate the dead is baseness, and to flatter them is surely folly.

From flattery, my lord, either of the dead or the living, I wish to be clear, and have, therefore, solicited the countenance of a patron, whom, if I knew

[p] See preface to Shakespeare.

how to praise him, I could praise with truth, and have the world on my side; whose candour and humanity are universally acknowledged, and whose judgment, perhaps, was then first to be doubted, when he condescended to admit this address from,

My lord,

Your lordship's most obliged,

and most obedient, humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

Payne's Introduction to the Game of Draughts.
1756

TO THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM HENRY, EARL OF ROCHFORD, &c.

MY LORD,

WHEN I take the liberty of addressing to your lordship a treatise on the game of draughts, I easily foresee, that I shall be in danger of suffering ridicule on one part, while I am gaining honour on the other; and that many, who may envy me the distinction of approaching you, will deride the present I presume to offer.

Had I considered this little volume, as having no purpose beyond that of teaching a game, I should, indeed, have left it to take its fate without a patron. Triflers may find or make any thing a trifle; but, since it is the great characteristick of a wise man to see events in their causes, to obviate consequences, and ascertain contingencies, your lordship will think nothing a trifle, by which the mind is inured to caution, foresight, and circumspection. The same skill, and often the same degree of skill,

is exerted in great and little things; and your lordship may, sometimes, exercise, on a harmless game[q], those abilities which have been so happily employed in the service of your country.

I am, my lord,
Your lordship's most obliged, most obedient,
and most humble servant,
WILLIAM PAYNE.

The Evangelical History of Jesus Christ harmonized, explained and illustrated[r]

2 vols. 8vo. 1758

TO THE LORDS SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL, AND COMMONS IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

THAT we are fallen upon an age in which corruption is barely not universal, is universally confessed. Venality sculks no longer in the dark, but snatches

[q] The game of draughts, we know, is peculiarly calculated to fix the attention, without straining it. There is a composure and gravity in draughts, which insensibly tranquillises the mind; and, accordingly, the Dutch are fond of it, as they are of smoking, of the sedative influence of which, though he himself (Dr. Johnson) never smoked, he had a high opinion.— Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides. 3rd edit. p. 48.

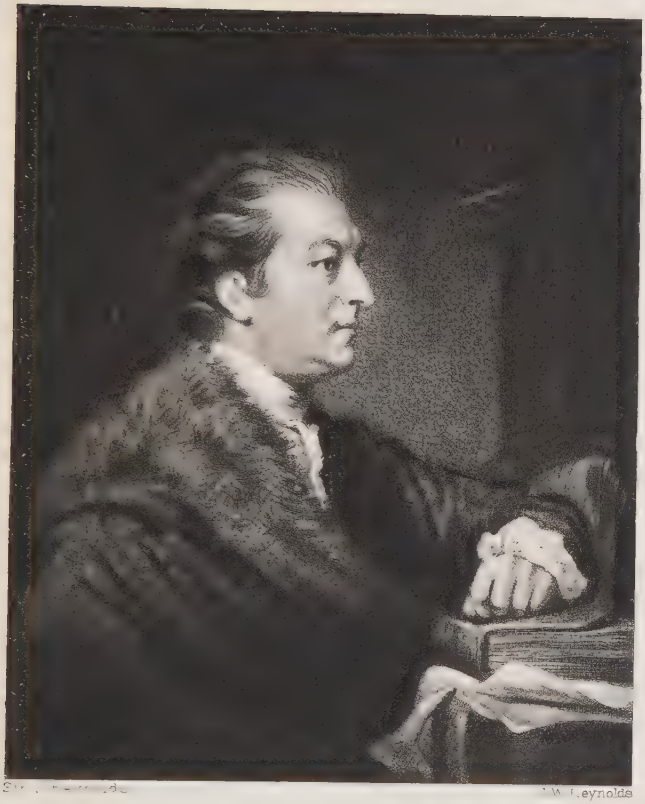
[r] The dedication to this work has been so confidently attributed to Dr. Johnson, and so constantly inserted among his productions, that it is given in the present edition. But Mr. Boswell was of opinion, that it was not Johnson's composition. "He was no *croaker*," observes his friendly biographer, "no declaimer against the *times*. He would not have written, 'That we are fallen upon an age, in which corruption is not barely universal, is universally confessed.' Nor, 'rapine preys on the publick without opposition, and perjury betrays it without injury.' Nor would he, to excite a speedy reformation, have conjured up such phantoms as these: 'A few years longer, and, perhaps, all endeavours will be in vain. We may be swallowed by an earthquake; we may be delivered to our enemies.'" "This is not Johnsonian," is Mr. Boswell's inference. iv. p. 423. note.— ED.

the bribe in publick; and prostitution issues forth without shame, glittering with the ornaments of successful wickedness. Rapine preys on the publick without opposition, and perjury betrays it without inquiry. Irreligion is not only avowed, but boasted; and the pestilence that used to walk in darkness, is now destroying at noonday.

Shall this be the state of the English nation; and shall her lawgivers behold it without regard? Must the torrent continue to roll on, till it shall sweep us into the gulf of perdition? Surely there will come a time, when the careless shall be frighted, and the sluggish shall be roused; when every passion shall be put upon the guard by the dread of general depravity; when he who laughs at wickedness in his companion, shall start from it in his child; when the man who fears not for his soul, shall tremble for his possessions; when it shall be discovered that religion only can secure the rich from robbery, and the poor from oppression; can defend the state from treachery, and the throne from assassination.

If this time be ever to come, let it come quickly: a few years longer, and, perhaps, all endeavours will be vain: we may be swallowed by an earthquake; we may be delivered to our enemies, or abandoned to that discord, which must inevitably prevail among men that have lost all sense of divine superintendence, and have no higher motive of action or forbearance, than present opinion of present interest.

It is the duty of private men to supplicate and propose; it is yours to hear and to do right. Let re-



SAMUEL DYER, ESQ. F.R.S.

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ligion be once more restored, and the nation shall once more be great and happy. This consequence is not far distant: that nation must always be powerful, where every man performs his duty; and every man will perform his duty, that considers himself, as a being whose condition is to be settled to all eternity by the laws of Christ.

The only doctrine by which man can be made "wise unto salvation," is the will of God, revealed in the books of the Old and the New Testament.

To study the scriptures, therefore, according to his abilities and attainments, is every man's duty; and to facilitate that study, to those whom nature hath made weak, or education has left ignorant, or indispensable cares detain from regular processes of inquiry, is the business of those who have been blessed with abilities and learning, and are appointed the instructors of the lower classes of men, by that common Father, who distributes to all created beings their qualifications and employments; who has allotted some to the labour of the hand, and some to the exercise of the mind; has commanded some to teach, and others to learn; has prescribed to some the patience of instruction, and to others the meekness of obedience.

By what methods the unenlightened and ignorant may be made proper readers of the word of God, has been long and diligently considered. Commentaries of all kinds have, indeed, been copiously produced; but there still remain multitudes to whom the labours of the learned are of little use, for whom expositions require an expositor. To those, indeed,

who read the divine books, without vain curiosity, or a desire to be wise beyond their powers, it will always be easy to discern the straight path, to find the words of everlasting life. But such is the condition of our nature, that we are always attempting what is difficult to perform: he who reads the scripture to gain goodness, is desirous, likewise, to gain knowledge, and by his impatience of ignorance, falls into errour.

This danger has appeared to the doctors of the Romish church, so much to be feared, and so difficult to be escaped, that they have snatched the bible out of the hands of the people, and confined the liberty of perusing it to those whom literature has previously qualified. By this expedient they have formed a kind of uniformity, I am afraid, too much like that of colours in the dark; but they have, certainly, usurped a power which God has never given them, and precluded great numbers from the highest spiritual consolation.

I know not whether this prohibition has not brought upon them an evil which they themselves have not discovered. It is granted, I believe, by the Romanists themselves, that the best commentaries on the bible have been the works of protestants. I know not, indeed, whether, since the celebrated paraphrase of Erasmus, any scholar has appeared amongst them, whose works are much valued, even in his own communion. Why have those who excel in every other kind of knowledge, to whom the world owes much of the increase of light, which has shone upon these latter ages, failed, and failed only, when they

have attempted to explain the scriptures of God? Why, but, because they are in the church less read, and less examined; because they have another rule of deciding controversies and instituting laws.

Of the bible, some of the books are prophetical; some doctrinal and historical, as the gospels, of which we have, in the subsequent pages, attempted an illustration. The books of the evangelists contain an account of the life of our blessed Saviour, more particularly of the years of his ministry, interspersed with his precepts, doctrines, and predictions. Each of these histories contain facts, and dictates related, likewise, in the rest, that the truth might be established by concurrence of testimony; and each has, likewise, facts and dictates which the rest omit, to prove that they were wrote without communication.

These writers, not affecting the exactness of chronologers, and, relating various events of the same life, or the same events with various circumstances, have some difficulties to him, who, without the help of many books, desires to collect a series of the acts and precepts of Jesus Christ; fully to know his life, whose example was given for our imitation; fully to understand his precepts, which it is sure destruction to disobey.

In this work, therefore, an attempt has been made, by the help of harmonists and expositors, to reduce the four gospels into one series of narration; to form a complete history out of the different narratives of the evangelists, by inserting every event in the order of time, and connecting every precept of life and doctrine, with the occasion on which it was

delivered; showing, as far as history or the knowledge of ancient customs can inform us, the reason and propriety of every action; and explaining, or endeavouring to explain, every precept and declaration in its true meaning.

Let it not be hastily concluded, that we intend to substitute this book for the gospels, or to obtrude our own expositions as the oracles of God. We recommend to the unlearned reader to consult us, when he finds any difficulty, as men who have laboured not to deceive ourselves, and who are without any temptation to deceive him; but as men, however, that, while they mean best, may be mistaken. Let him be careful, therefore, to distinguish what we cite from the gospels, from what we offer as our own: he will find many difficulties removed; and, if some yet remain, let him remember that, "God is in heaven and we upon earth," that, "our thoughts are not God's thoughts," and that the great cure of doubt is an humble mind[8].

Angell's Stenography, or Shorthand improved. 1758

TO THE MOST NOBLE CHARLES DUKE OF RICHMOND, LENNOX, AUBIGNY, &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,

THE improvement of arts and sciences has always been esteemed laudable: and, in proportion to their utility and advantage to mankind, they have generally gained the patronage of persons the most distin-

[8] "My doctrine is not mine," said the Divine Founder of our religion, "but his that sent me. If any man will *do* his will, he shall *know* of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." St. John, vii. 16, 17.— ED.

guished for birth, learning, and reputation in the world. This is an art, undoubtedly, of publick utility, and which has been cultivated by persons of distinguished abilities, as will appear from its history. But, as most of their systems have been defective, clogged with a multiplicity of rules, and perplexed by arbitrary, intricate, and impracticable schemes, I have endeavoured to rectify their defects, to adapt it to all capacities, and render it of general, lasting, and extensive benefit. How this is effected the following plates will sufficiently explain, to which I have prefixed a suitable introduction, and a concise and impartial history of the origin and progressive improvements of this art. And, as I have submitted the whole to the inspection of accurate judges, whose approbation I am honoured with, I most humbly crave leave to publish it to the world, under your grace's patronage: not merely on account of your great dignity and high rank in life, though these receive a lustre from your grace's humanity; but also from a knowledge of your grace's disposition to encourage every useful art, and favour all true promoters of science. That your grace may long live the friend of learning, the guardian of liberty, and the patron of virtue, and then transmit your name, with the highest honour and esteem, to latest posterity, is the ardent wish of

Your grace's most humble, &c[t].

[t] This is the dedication mentioned by Dr. Johnson himself in Boswell's Life, vol. ii. 226. I should not else have suspected what has so little of his manner.

Baretti's Dictionary of the English and Italian Languages. 2 vols. 4to. 1760

TO HIS EXCELLENCY DON FELIX, MARQUIS OF ABREU AND BERTODANO, AMBASSADOUR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY FROM HIS CATHOLICK MAJESTY TO THE KING OF GREAT BRITAIN

MY LORD,

THAT acuteness of penetration into characters and designs, and that nice discernment of human passions and practices, which have raised you to your present height of station and dignity of employment, have long shown you that dedicatory addresses are written for the sake of the author more frequently than of the patron; and, though they profess only reverence and zeal, are commonly dictated by interest or vanity.

I shall, therefore, not endeavour to conceal my motives, but confess, that the Italian Dictionary is dedicated to your excellency, that I might gratify my vanity, by making it known, that, in a country where I am a stranger, I have been able, without any external recommendation, to obtain the notice and countenance of a nobleman so eminent for knowledge and ability, that, in his twenty-third year, he was sent as plenipotentiary to superintend, at Aix la Chapelle, the interests of a nation remarkable, above all others, for gravity and prudence; and who, at an age when very few are admitted to publick trust, transacts the most important affairs between two of the greatest monarchs of the world.

If I could attribute to my own merits the favours which your excellency every day confers upon me,

I know not how much my pride might be inflamed; but, when I observe the extensive benevolence and boundless liberality, by which all who have the honour to approach you are dismissed more happy than they come, I am afraid of raising my own value, since I dare not ascribe it so much to my power of pleasing as your willingness to be pleased.

Yet, as every man is inclined to flatter himself, I am desirous to hope, that I am not admitted to greater intimacy than others, without some qualifications for so advantageous a distinction, and shall think it my duty to justify, by constant respect and sincerity, the favours which you have been pleased to show me.

I am, my lord,
Your excellency's most humble
and most obedient servant,
J. Baretti.

London, Jan. 12, 1760.

A complete System of Astronomical Chronology, unfolding the Scriptures. By John Kennedy, rector of Bradley, in Derbyshire. 4to. 1762

TO THE KING

SIR,

Having by long labour, and diligent inquiry, endeavoured to illustrate and establish the chronology of the bible, I hope to be pardoned the ambition of inscribing my work to your majesty.

An age of war is not often an age of learning; the tumult and anxiety of military preparations seldom leave attention vacant to the silent progress of study, and the placid conquests of investigation; yet,

surely, a vindication of the inspired writers can never be unseasonably offered to the defender of the faith; nor can it ever be improper to promote that religion, without which all other blessings are snares of destruction; without which armies cannot make us safe, nor victories make us happy.

I am far from imagining that my testimony can add any thing to the honours of your majesty, to the splendour of a reign crowned with triumphs, to the beauty of a life dignified by virtue. I can only wish, that your reign may long continue such as it has begun, and that the effulgence of your example may spread its light through distant ages, till it shall be the highest praise of any future monarch, that he exhibits some resemblance of GEORGE THE THIRD.

I am, Sir,

Your majesty's, &c.

JOHN KENNEDY.

Hoole's translation of Tasso's Jerusalem Delivered. 1763

TO THE QUEEN

MADAM,

To approach the high and the illustrious has been, in all ages, the privilege of poets; and though translations cannot justly claim the same honour, yet they naturally follow their authors as attendants; and I hope that, in return for having enabled Tasso to diffuse his fame through the British dominions, I may be introduced by him to the presence of your majesty.

Tasso has a peculiar claim to your majesty's favour, as follower and panegyrist of the house of Este,

which has one common ancestor with the house of Hanover; and, in reviewing his life, it is not easy to forbear a wish, that he had lived in a happier time, when he might, among the descendants of that illustrious family, have found a more liberal and potent patronage.

I cannot but observe, Madam, how unequally reward is proportioned to merit, when I reflect that the happiness which was withheld from Tasso, is reserved for me; and that the poem which once hardly procured to its author the countenance of the princes of Ferrara, has attracted to its translator the favourable notice of a British queen.

Had this been the fate of Tasso, he would have been able to have celebrated the condescension of your majesty in nobler language, but could not have felt it with more ardent gratitude, than,

Madam,
Your majesty's most faithful
and devoted servant.

London and Westminster Improved. Illustrated by Plans. 4*to.* 1766

TO THE KING

SIR,

The patronage of works which have a tendency towards advancing the happiness of mankind, naturally belongs to great princes; and publick good, in which publick elegance is comprised, has ever been the object of your majesty's regard.

In the following pages your majesty, I flatter myself, will find, that I have endeavoured at exten-

sive and general usefulness. Knowing, therefore, your majesty's early attention to the polite arts, and more particular affection for the study of architecture, I was encouraged to hope, that the work which I now presume to lay before your majesty, might be thought not unworthy your royal favour; and that the protection which your majesty always affords to those who mean well, may be extended to,

Sir,

Your majesty's most dutiful subject,
and most obedient and most humble servant,
JOHN GWYNN.

The English Works of Roger Ascham, edited by James Bennet. 4*to.* 1767

TO THE RIGHT HON. ANTHONY ASHLEY COOPER, EARL OF SHAFTESBURY, BARON ASHLEY, LORD LIEUTENANT AND CUSTOS ROTULORUM OF DORSETSHIRE, F. R. S.

MY LORD,

HAVING endeavoured, by an elegant and useful edition, to recover the esteem of the publick to an author undeservedly neglected, the only care which I now owe to his memory, is that of inscribing his works to a patron, whose acknowledged eminence of character may awaken attention, and attract regard.

I have not suffered the zeal of an editor so far to take possession of my mind, as that I should obtrude upon your lordship any productions unsuitable to the dignity of your rank or of your sentiments. Ascham was not only the chief ornament of a celebrated college, but visited foreign countries, frequented courts, and lived in familiarity with statesmen and princes;

not only instructed scholars in literature, but formed Elizabeth to empire.

To propagate the works of such a writer will not be unworthy of your lordship's patriotism; for I know not, what greater benefits you can confer on your country, than that of preserving worthy names from oblivion, by joining them with your own.

I am, my lord,
Your lordship's most obliged,
most obedient, and most humble servant,
JAMES BENNET.

Adams's Treatise on the Globes. 1767

TO THE KING

SIR,

IT is the privilege of real greatness not to be afraid of diminution by condescending to the notice of little things; and I, therefore, can boldly solicit the patronage of your majesty to the humble labours by which I have endeavoured to improve the instruments of science, and make the globes, on which the earth and sky are delineated, less defective in their construction, and less difficult in their use.

Geography is, in a peculiar manner, the science of princes. When a private student revolves the terraqueous globe, he beholds a succession of countries, in which he has no more interest, than in the imaginary regions of Jupiter and Saturn: but your majesty must contemplate the scientifick picture with other sentiments; and consider, as oceans and continents are rolling before you, how large a part of mankind is now waiting on your determinations,

and may receive benefits, or suffer evils, as your influence is extended or withdrawn.

The provinces, which your majesty's arms have added to your dominions, make no inconsiderable part of the orb allotted to human beings. Your power is acknowledged by nations, whose names we know not yet how to write, and whose boundaries we cannot yet describe. But your majesty's lenity and beneficence give us reason to expect the time, when science shall be advanced by the diffusion of happiness; when the deserts of America shall become pervious and safe; when those who are now restrained by fear shall be attracted by reverence; and multitudes, who now range the woods for prey, and live at the mercy of winds and seasons, shall, by the paternal care of your majesty, enjoy the plenty of cultivated lands, the pleasures of society, the security of law, and the light of revelation.

I am, Sir,

Your majesty's most humble, most obedient,
and most dutiful subject and servant,

GEORGE ADAMS.

Bishop Zachary Pearce's Posthumous Works, 2 vols. 4to. Published by the Rev. Mr. Derby. 1777

TO THE KING

SIR,

I PRESUME to lay before your majesty, the last labours of a learned bishop, who died in the toils and duties of his calling. He is now beyond the reach of all earthly honours and rewards; and only the hope of inciting others to imitate him, makes it now

fit to be remembered, that he enjoyed in his life the favour of your majesty.

The tumultuary life of princes seldom permits them to survey the wide extent of national interest without losing sight of private merit; to exhibit qualities which may be imitated by the highest and the humblest of mankind; and to be at once amiable and great.

Such characters, if now and then they appear in history, are contemplated with admiration. May it be the ambition of all your subjects to make haste with their tribute of reverence: and, as posterity may learn from your majesty how kings should live, may they learn, likewise, from your people, how they should be honoured.

I am, may it please your majesty,
with the most profound respect,
Your majesty's most dutiful and devoted
subject and servant.

PREFACE TO TABLES OF INTEREST

Designed to answer, in the most correct and expeditious manner, the common purposes of business, particularly the business of the publick funds

BY JOHN PAYNE, OF THE BANK OF ENGLAND. 1758

AMONG the writers of fiction, whose business is to furnish that entertainment which fancy perpetually demands, it is a standing plea, that the beauties of nature are now exhausted; that imitation has exerted all its power; and that nothing more can be done for the service of their mistress, than to exhibit a perpetual transposition of known objects, and draw new pictures, not by introducing new images, but by giving new lights and shades, a new arrangement and colouring to the old. This plea has been cheerfully admitted; and fancy, led by the hand of a skilful guide, treads over again the flowery path she has often trod before, as much enamoured with every new diversification of the same prospect, as with the first appearance of it.

In the regions of science, however, there is not the same indulgence: the understanding and the judgment travel there in the pursuit of Truth, whom they always expect to find in one simple form, free from the disguises of dress and ornament: and, as they travel with laborious step and a fixed eye, they are content to stop, when the shades of night darken the prospect, and patiently wait the radiance of a new morning, to lead them forward in the path they have chosen, which, however thorny, or however steep, is severely preferred to the most pleasing excursions that bring them no nearer to the object of their search. The plea, therefore, that nature is ex-

hausted, and that nothing is left to gratify the mind, but different combinations of the same ideas, when urged as a reason for multiplying unnecessary labours, among the sons of science, is not so readily admitted: the understanding, when in possession of truth, is satisfied with the simple acquisition; and not, like fancy, inclined to wander after new pleasures, in the diversification of objects already known, which, perhaps, may lead to errour.

But, notwithstanding this general disinclination to accumulate labours, for the sake of that pleasure which arises merely from different modes of investigating truth, yet, as the mines of science have been diligently opened, and their treasures widely diffused, there may be parts chosen, which, by a proper combination and arrangement, may contribute not only to entertainment but use; like the rays of the sun, collected in a concave mirror, to serve particular purposes of light and heat.

The power of arithmetical numbers has been tried to a vast extent, and variously applied to the improvement both of business and science. In particular, so many calculations have been made, with respect to the value and use of money, that some serve only for speculation and amusement; and there is great opportunity for selecting a few that are peculiarly adapted to common business, and the daily interchanges of property among men. Those which happen in the publick funds are, at this time, the most frequent and numerous; and to answer the purposes of that business, in some degree, more perfectly than has hitherto been done, the following

tables are published. What that degree of perfection above other tables of the same kind may be, is a matter, not of opinion and taste, in which many might vary, but of accuracy and usefulness, with respect to which most will agree. The approbation they meet with will, therefore, depend upon the experience of those for whom they were principally designed, the proprietors of the publick funds, and the brokers who transact the business of the funds, to whose patronage they are cheerfully committed.

Among the brokers of stocks are men of great honour and probity, who are candid and open in all their transactions, and incapable of mean and selfish purposes; and it is to be lamented, that a market of such importance, as the present state of this nation has made theirs, should be brought into any discredit by the intrusion of bad men, who, instead of serving their country, and procuring an honest subsistence in the army or the fleet, endeavour to maintain luxurious tables, and splendid equipages, by sporting with the publick credit.

It is not long, since the evil of stockjobbing was risen to such an enormous height, as to threaten great injury to every actual proprietor, particularly, to many widows and orphans, who, being bound to depend upon the funds for their whole subsistence, could not possibly retreat from the approaching danger. But this evil, after many unsuccessful attempts of the legislature to conquer it, was, like many others, at length subdued by its own violence; and the reputable stockbrokers seem now to have it in their power effectually to prevent its return, by not suf-

fering the most distant approaches of it to take footing in their own practice, and by opposing every effort made for its recovery by the desperate sons of fortune, who, not having the courage of highwaymen take 'Change-alley rather than the road, because, though more injurious than highwaymen, they are less in danger of punishment by the loss either of liberty or life.

With respect to the other patrons, to whose encouragement these tables have been recommended, the proprietors of the publick funds, who are busy in the improvement of their fortunes, it is sufficient to say—that no motive can sanctify the accumulation of wealth, but an ardent desire to make the most honourable and virtuous use of it, by contributing to the support of good government, the increase of arts and industry, the rewards of genius and virtue, and the relief of wretchedness and want.

What good, what true, what fit we justly call,
Let this be all our care — for this is all;
To lay this treasure up, and hoard with haste
What ev'ry day will want, and most the last.
This done, the poorest can no wants endure;
And this not done, the richest must be poor. POPE.

THOUGHTS ON THE CORONATION OF HIS MAJESTY

Or, reasons offered against confining the procession to the usual track, and pointing out others more commodious and proper. To which are prefixed, a plan of the different paths recommended, with the parts adjacent, and a sketch of the procession. Most humbly submitted to consideration[u].

ALL pomp is instituted for the sake of the publick. A show without spectators can no longer be a show. Magnificence in obscurity is equally vain with a sundial in the grave.

As the wisdom of our ancestors has appointed a very splendid and ceremonious inauguration of our kings, their intention was, that they should receive their crown with such awful rites, as might for ever impress upon them a due sense of the duties which they were to take, when the happiness of nations is put into their hands; and that the people, as many as can possibly be witnesses to any single act, should openly acknowledge their sovereign by universal homage.

By the late method of conducting the coronation, all these purposes have been defeated. Our kings, with their train, have crept to the temple through obscure passages; and the crown has been worn out of sight of the people. Of the multitudes, whom loyalty or curiosity brought together, the greater part has returned without a single glimpse of their prince's grandeur, and the day that opened with festivity ended in discontent.

This evil has proceeded from the narrowness and shortness of the way, through which the procession has lately passed. As it is narrow, it admits of very

[u] First printed in the year 1761.

few spectators; as it is short, it is soon passed. The first part of the train reaches the Abbey, before the whole has left the palace; and the nobility of England, in their robes of state, display their riches only to themselves.

All this inconvenience may be easily avoided by choosing a wider and longer course, which may be again enlarged and varied by going one way, and returning another. This is not without a precedent; for, not to inquire into the practice of remoter princes, the procession of Charles the second's coronation issued from the Tower, and passed through the whole length of the city to Whitehall[v].

[v] The king went early in the morning to the Tower of London in his coach, most of the lords being there before. And about ten of the clock they set forward towards Whitehall, ranged in that order as the heralds had appointed; those of the long robe, the king's council at law, the masters of the chancery and judges, going first, and so the lords in their order, very splendidly habited, on rich footcloths; the number of their footmen being limited, to the dukes ten, to the lords eight, and to the viscounts six, and to the barons four, all richly clad, as their other servants were. The whole show was the most glorious, in the order and expense, that had ever been seen in England: they who rode first being in Fleet street when the king issued out of the Tower, as was known by the discharge of the ordnance: and it was near three of the clock in the afternoon, when the king alighted at Whitehall. The next morning the king rode in the same state in his robes, and with his crown on his head, and all the lords in their robes to Westminster hall; where all the ensigns for the coronation were delivered to those who were appointed to carry them, the earl of Northumberland being made high constable, and the earl of Suffolk, earl marshal, for the day. And then all the lords in their order, and the king himself, walked on foot, upon blue cloth, from Westminster hall to the Abbey church, where, after a sermon preached by Dr. Morley, (then bishop of Worcester,) in Henry the seventh's chapel, the king was sworn, crowned, and anointed, by Dr. Juxon, archbishop of Canterbury, with all the solemnity that in those cases had been used. All which being done, the king returned in the same manner on foot to Westminster hall, which was adorned with rich hangings and statues; and there the king dined, and the lords on either side, at tables provided for them: and all other ceremonies were performed with great order and magnificence.— Life of lord Clarendon, p. 187.

The path in the late coronations has been only from Westminster hall, along New Palace yard, into Union street, through the extreme end of King street, and to the Abbey door, by the way of St. Margaret's church yard.

The paths which I propose the procession to pass through, are,

1. From St. James's palace, along Pall Mall and Charing Cross, by Whitehall, through Parliament street, down Bridge street, into King street, round St. Margaret's church yard, and from thence into the Abbey.

2. From St. James's palace across the canal, into the Birdcage walk, from thence into Great George street, then turning down Long ditch, (the Gate house previously to be taken down,) proceed to the Abbey. Or,

3. Continuing the course along George street, into King street, and by the way of St. Margaret's church yard, to pass into the west door of the Abbey.

4. From St. James's palace, the usual way his majesty passes to the House of Lords, as far as to the parade, when, leaving the horse guards on the left, proceed along the Park, up to Great George street, and pass to the Abbey in either of the tracks last mentioned.

5. From Westminster hall into Parliament street, down Bridge street, along Great George street, through Long ditch, (the Gate house, as before observed, to be taken down,) and so on to the west door of the Abbey.

6. From Whitehall up Parliament street, down Bridge street, into King street, round St. Margaret's church yard, proceed into the Abbey.

7. From the House of Lords along St. Margaret's street, across New Palace yard, into Parliament street, and from thence to the Abbey by the way last mentioned.

But if, on no account, the path must be extended to any of the lengths here recommended, I could wish, rather than see the procession confined to the old way, that it should pass,

8. From Westminster hall along Palace yard, into Parliament street, and continued in the last mentioned path, viz. through Bridge street, King street, and round the church yard, to the west door of the cathedral.

9. The return from the Abbey, in either case, to be as usual, viz. round St. Margaret's church yard, into King street, through Union street, along New Palace yard, and so into Westminster hall.

It is almost indifferent which of the six first ways, now proposed, be taken; but there is a stronger reason than mere convenience for changing the common course. Some of the streets in the old track are so ruinous, that there is danger lest the houses, loaded as they will be with people, all pressing forward in the same direction, should fall down upon the procession. The least evil that can be expected is, that in so close a crowd, some will be trampled upon, and others smothered; and, surely, a pomp that costs a single life is too dearly bought. The new

streets, as they are more extensive, will afford place to greater numbers, with less danger.

In this proposal, I do not foresee any objection that can reasonably be made. That a longer march will require more time, is not to be mentioned, as implying any defect in a scheme, of which the whole purpose is to lengthen the march, and protract the time. The longest course, which I have proposed, is not equal to an hour's walk in the Park. The labour is not such, as that the king should refuse it to his people, or the nobility grudge it to the king. Queen Anne went from the palace through the Park to the Hall, on the day of her coronation; and, when old and infirm, used to pass, on solemn thanksgivings, from the palace to St. Paul's church[w].

[w] In order to convey to the reader some idea, how highly parade and magnificence were estimated by our ancestors, on these solemn occasions, I shall take notice of the manner of conducting lady Anne Boleyn from Greenwich, previous to her coronation, as it is recited by Stow.

King Henry the eighth (says that historian) having divorced queen Catherine, and married Anne Boleyn, or Boloine, who was descended from Godfrey Boloine, mayor of the city of London, and intending her coronation, sent to order the lord mayor, not only to make all the preparations necessary for conducting his royal consort from Greenwich, by water, to the Tower of London, but to adorn the city after the most magnificent manner, for her passage through it to Westminster.

In obedience to the royal precept, the mayor and common council not only ordered the company of haberdashers, of which the lord mayor was a member, to prepare a magnificent state barge; but enjoined all the city corporations to provide themselves with barges, and to adorn them in the most superb manner, and especially to have them supplied with good bands of music.

On the 29th of May, the time prefixed for this pompous procession by water the mayor, aldermen, and commons, assembled at St. Mary hill; the mayor and aldermen in scarlet, with gold chains, and those who were knights, with the collars of SS. At one they went on board the city barge at Billingsgate, which was most magnificently decorated, and attended by fifty noble barges, belonging to the several companies of

Part of my scheme supposes the demolition of the Gate house, a building so offensive, that, with-

the city, with each its own corporation on board; and, for the better regulation of this procession, it was ordered, that each barge should keep twice their lengths asunder.

Thus regulated, the city barge was preceded by another mounted with ordnance, and the figures of dragons, and other monsters, incessantly emitting fire and smoke, with much noise. Then the city barge, attended on the right by the haberdashers' state barge, called the bachelors', which was covered with gold brocade, and adorned with sails of silk, with two rich standards of the king's and queen's arms at her head and stern, besides a variety of flags and streamers, containing the arms of that company, and those of the merchant adventurers; besides which, the shrouds and ratlines were hung with a number of small bells: on the left was a barge that contained a very beautiful mount, on which stood a white falcon crowned, perched upon a golden stump, enriched with roses, being the queen's emblem; and round the mount sat several beautiful virgins, singing, and playing upon instruments. The other barges followed, in regular order, till they came below Greenwich. On their return the procession began with that barge which was before the last, in which were the mayor's and sheriff's officers, and this was followed by those of the inferior companies, ascending to the lord mayor's, which immediately preceded that of the queen, who was attended by the bachelors' or state barge, with the magnificence of which her majesty was much delighted; and being arrived at the Tower, she returned the lord mayor and aldermen thanks, for the pomp with which she had been conducted thither.

Two days after, the lord mayor, in a gown of crimson velvet, and a rich collar of SS, attended by the sheriffs, and two domestics in red and white damask, went to receive the queen at the Tower of London, whence the sheriffs returned to see that everything was in order. The streets were just before new gravelled, from the Tower to Temple-bar, and railed in on each side, to the intent that the horses should not slide on the pavement, nor the people be hurt by the horses; within the rails near Gracechurch, stood a body of Anseatic merchants, and next to them the several corporations of the city, in their formalities, reaching to the alderman's station at the upper end of Cheapside. On the opposite side were placed the city constables, dressed in silk and velvet, with staffs in their hands, to prevent the breaking in of the mob, or any other disturbance. On this occasion, Gracechurch street and Corn hill were hung with crimson and scarlet cloth, and the sides of the houses of a place then called Goldsmith's row, in Cheapside, were adorned with gold brocades, velvet, and rich tapestry.

out any occasional reason, it ought to be pulled down, for it disgraces the present magnificence of

The procession began from the Tower, with twelve of the French ambassador's domestics in blue velvet, the trappings of their horses being blue sarsnet, interspersed with white crosses; after whom marched those of the equestrian order, two and two, followed by judges in their robes, two and two; then came the knights of the bath in violet gowns, purfled with menever. Next came the abbots, barons, bishops, earls, and marquises, in their robes, two and two. Then the lord chancellor, followed by the Venetian ambassador and the archbishop of York; next the French ambassador and the archbishop of Canterbury, followed by two gentlemen representing the dukes of Normandy and Aquitain; after whom rode the lord mayor of London with his mace, and garter in his coat of arms; then the duke of Suffolk, lord high steward, followed by the deputy marshal of England, and all the other officers of state in their robes, carrying the symbols of their several offices: then others of the nobility in crimson velvet, and all the queen's officers in scarlet, followed by her chancellor uncovered, who immediately preceded his mistress.

The queen was dressed in silver brocade, with a mantle of the same furred with ermine; her hair was dishevelled, and she wore a chaplet upon her head set with jewels of inestimable value. She sat in a litter covered with silver tissue, and carried by two beautiful pads cloathed in white damask, and led by her footmen. Over the litter was carried a canopy of cloth of gold, with a silver bell at each corner, supported by sixteen knights alternately, by four at a time.

After her majesty came her chamberlain, followed by her master of horse, leading a beautiful pad, with a side-saddle, and trappings of silver tissue. Next came seven ladies in crimson velvet, faced with gold brocade, mounted on beautiful horses with gold trappings. Then followed two chariots covered with cloth of gold, in the first of which were the duchess of Norfolk and the marchioness of Dorset, and in the second four ladies in crimson velvet; then followed seven ladies dressed in the same manner, on horseback, with magnificent trappings, followed by another chariot all in white, with six ladies in crimson velvet; this was followed by another all in red, with eight ladies in the same dress with the former; next came thirty gentlewomen, attendants to the ladies of honour; they were on horseback, dressed in silks and velvet; and the cavalcade was closed by the horse guards.

This pompous procession being arrived in Fenchurch street, the queen stopped at a beautiful pageant, crowded with children in mercantile habits, who congratulated her majesty upon the joyful occasion of her happy arrival in the city.

the capital, and is a continual nuisance to neighbours and passengers.

Thence she proceeded to Gracechurch corner, where was erected a very magnificent pageant, at the expense of the company of Anseatic merchants, in which was represented mount Parnassus, with the fountain of Helicon, of white marble, out of which arose four springs, about four feet high, centering at the top in a small globe, from whence issued plenty of Rhenish wine till night. On the mount sat Apollo, at his feet was Calliope, and beneath were the rest of the Muses, surrounding the mount, and playing upon a variety of musical instruments, at whose feet were inscribed several epigrams suited to the occasion, in letters of gold.

Her majesty then proceeded to Leadenhall, where stood a pageant, representing a hill encompassed with red and white roses; and above it was a golden stump, upon which a white falcon, descending from above, perched, and was quickly followed by an angel, who put a crown of gold upon his head. A little lower on the hillock sat St. Anne, surrounded by her progeny, one of whom made an oration, in which was a wish that her majesty might prove extremely prolific.

The procession then advanced to the conduit in Corn hill, where the Graces sat enthroned, with a fountain before them, incessantly discharging wine; and underneath, a poet, who described the qualities peculiar to each of these amiable deities, and presented the queen with their several gifts.

The cavalcade thence proceeded to a great conduit that stood opposite to Mercers' hall in Cheapside, and, upon that occasion, was painted with a variety of emblems, and during the solemnity and remaining part of the day, ran with different sorts of wine, for the entertainment of the populace.

At the end of Wood street, the standard there was finely embellished with royal portraitures and a number of flags, on which were painted coats of arms and trophies, and above was a concert of vocal and instrumental music.

At the upper end of Cheapside was the aldermen's station, where the recorder addressed the queen in a very elegant oration, and, in the name of the citizens, presented her with a thousand marks, in a purse of gold tissue, which her majesty very gracefully received.

At a small distance, by Cheapside conduit, was a pageant, in which were seated Minerva, Juno, and Venus; before whom stood the god Mercury, who, in their names, presented the queen a golden apple.

At St. Paul's gate was a fine pageant, in which sat three ladies richly dressed, with each a chaplet on her head, and a tablet in her hand, containing Latin inscriptions.

A longer course of scaffolding is, doubtless, more expensive than a shorter; but, it is hoped, that the time is now passed, when any design was received or rejected, according to the money that it would cost. Magnificence cannot be cheap, for what is cheap cannot be magnificent. The money that is so spent, is spent at home, and the king will receive again what he lays out on the pleasure of his people. Nor is it to be omitted, that, if the cost be considered as expended by the publick, much more will be saved than lost; for the excessive prices, at which windows and tops of houses are now let, will be abated; not only greater numbers will be admitted to the show, but each will come at a cheaper rate.

Some regulations are necessary, whatever track be

At the east end of St. Paul's cathedral, the queen was entertained by some of the scholars belonging to St. Paul's school, with verses in praise of the king and her majesty, with which she seemed highly delighted.

Thence proceeding to Ludgate, which was finely decorated, her majesty was entertained with several songs adapted to the occasion, sung in concert by men and boys upon the leads over the gate.

At the end of Shoe lane, in Fleet street, a handsome tower with four turrets, was erected upon the conduit, in each of which stood one of the cardinal virtues, with their several symbols; who, addressing themselves to the queen, promised they would never leave her, but be always her constant attendants. Within the tower was an excellent concert of music, and the conduit all the while ran with various sorts of wine.

At Temple-bar she was again entertained with songs, sung in concert by a choir of men and boys; and having from thence proceeded to Westminster, she returned the lord mayor thanks for his good offices, and those of the citizens, that day. The day after, the lord mayor, aldermen, and sheriffs, assisted at the coronation, which was performed with great splendour.— Stow's Annals.

Note. The same historian informs us, that queen Elizabeth passed in the like manner, through the city, to her coronation.

The admirers of the descriptions of pageants may be amply gratified in Henry's History of England. The field of the cloth of gold shines "luna inter minora sidera."— Ed.

chosen. The scaffold ought to be raised at least four feet, with rails high enough to support the standers, and yet so low as not to hinder the view.

It would add much to the gratification of the people, if the horse guards, by which all our processions have been of late encumbered, and rendered dangerous to the multitude, were to be left behind at the coronation; and if, contrary to the desires of the people, the procession must pass in the old track, that the number of foot soldiers be diminished; since it cannot but offend every Englishman to see troops of soldiers placed between him and his sovereign, as if they were the most honourable of the people, or the king required guards to secure his person from his subjects. As their station makes them think themselves important, their insolence is always such as may be expected from servile authority; and the impatience of the people, under such immediate oppression, always produces quarrels, tumults, and mischief.

PREFACE TO ARTISTS' CATALOGUE

FOR 1762

THE publick may justly require to be informed of the nature and extent of every design, for which the favour of the publick is openly solicited. The artists, who were themselves the first projectors of an exhibition in this nation, and who have now contributed to the following catalogue, think it, therefore, necessary to explain their purpose, and justify their conduct. An exhibition of the works of art, being a spectacle new in this kingdom, has raised various opinions and conjectures, among those who are unacquainted with the practice in foreign nations. Those who set out their performances to general view, have been too often considered as the rivals of each other, as men actuated, if not by avarice, at least by vanity, and contending for superiority of fame, though not for a pecuniary prize: it cannot be denied or doubted, that all who offer themselves to criticism are desirous of praise; this desire is not only innocent, but virtuous, while it is undebased by artifice, and unpolluted by envy, and of envy or artifice these men can never be accused, who, already enjoying all the honours and profits of their profession, are content to stand candidates for publick notice, with genius yet unexperienced, and diligence yet unrewarded; who, without any hope of increasing their own reputation or interest, expose their names and their works, only that they may furnish an opportunity of appearance to the young, the diffident, and the neglected. The purpose of this exhibition is not to enrich the artists, but to advance the art; the eminent are not flattered with preference, nor the obscure

insulted with contempt; whoever hopes to deserve publick favour, is here invited to display his merit.

Of the price put upon this exhibition, some account may be demanded. Whoever sets his work to be shown, naturally desires a multitude of spectators; but his desire defeats its own end, when spectators assemble in such numbers as to obstruct one another. Though we are far from wishing to diminish the pleasures, or depreciate the sentiments of any class of the community, we know, however, what every one knows, that all cannot be judges or purchasers of works of art; yet we have already found, by experience, that all are desirous to see an exhibition. When the terms of admission were low, our room was thronged with such multitudes as made access dangerous, and frightened away those whose approbation was most desired.

Yet, because it is seldom believed that money is got but for the love of money, we shall tell the use which we intend to make of our expected profits.

Many artists of great abilities are unable to sell their works for their due price; to remove this inconvenience, an annual sale will be appointed, to which every man may send his works, and send them, if he will, without his name. These works will be reviewed by the committee that conduct the exhibition. A price will be secretly set on every piece, and registered by the secretary. If the piece exposed is sold for more, the whole price shall be the artist's; but if the purchaser's value is at less than the committee, the artist shall be paid the deficiency from the profits of the exhibition.

OPINIONS ON QUESTIONS OF LAW

THE following opinions on cases of law may be regarded as among the strongest proofs of Johnson's enlarged powers of mind, and of his ability to grapple with subjects, on general principles, with whose technicalities he could not be familiar. Of law, as a science, he ever expressed the deepest admiration, and an author who combines an accurate knowledge of the practical details of jurisprudence with the most philosophical views of legal principles, has quoted Dr. Johnson, as pronouncing the study of law "the last effort of human intelligence acting upon human experience." We allude to the eloquent and excellent Sir James Mackintosh's Discourse on the Study of the Law of Nature and Nations, p. 58. Lord Bacon, in his two books on the Advancement of Learning, has affirmed, that professed lawyers are not the best law authors; and the comprehensive and lucid opinions which Dr. Johnson has here given, and which, in many instances, have been subsequently sanctioned by legislative authority, seem to establish the remark.

The first Case in the present edition, involves an ingenious defence of the right of abridgment, founded on considerations on Dr. Trapp's celebrated sermons "on the nature, folly, sin, and danger of being righteous over-much." These discourses, about the year 1739, when methodism was a novelty, attracted much attention. Mr. Cave, always anxious to gratify his readers, abridged and extracted parts from them, and promised a continuation. This never appeared; stopped, perhaps, by threats of prosecution on the part of the original publishers

of the sermons. It was, in all probability, on this occasion, that Dr. Johnson wrote the following paper.—Gent. Mag. July, 1787. It is a subject with whose bearings he might be presumed to be practically conversant; and, accordingly, we find, in his memoirs, many recorded arguments of his, on literary property. They uniformly exhibit the most enlarged and liberal views—a readiness to sacrifice private considerations to publick and general good. He wished the author to be adequately remunerated for his labour, and tenderly protected from spoliation, but, by no means, encouraged in monopoly. See Boswell's Life, i. ii. iv.

Dr. T [rapp]'s Sermons

CONSIDERATIONS ON CASE

ABRIDGED BY MR. CAVE, 1739

1. That the copy of a book is the property of the author, and that he may, by sale, or otherwise, transfer that property to another, who has a right to be protected in the possession of that property, so transferred, is not to be denied.

2. That the complainants may be lawfully invested with the property of this copy, is likewise granted.

3. But the complainants have mistaken the nature of this property; and, in consequence of their mistake, have supposed it to be invaded by an act, in itself legal, and justifiable by an uninterrupted series of precedents, from the first establishment of printing among us, down to the present time.

4. He that purchases the copy of a book, purchases the sole right of printing it, and of vending the books printed according to it; but has no right to add to it, or take from it, without the author's consent, who still preserves such a right in it, as follows from the right every man has to preserve his own reputation.

5. Every single book, so sold by the proprietor, becomes the property of the buyer, who purchases, with the book, the right of making such use of it as he shall think most convenient, either for his own improvement or amusement, or the benefit or entertainment of mankind.

6. This right the reader of a book may use, many ways, to the disadvantage both of the author and the proprietor, which yet they have not any right to complain of, because the author when he wrote, and the proprietor when he purchased the copy, knew, or ought to have known, that the one wrote, and the other purchased, under the hazard of such treatment from the buyer and reader, and without any security from the bad consequences of that treatment, except the excellence of the book.

7. Reputation and property are of different kinds; one kind of each is more necessary to be secured by the law than another, and the law has provided more effectually for its defence. My character as a man, a subject, or a trader, is under the protection of the law; but my reputation, as an author, is at the mercy of the reader, who lies under no other obligations to do me justice than those of religion and morality. If a man calls me rebel or bankrupt,

I may prosecute and punish him; but, if a man calls me ideot or plagiary, I have no remedy; since, by selling him the book, I admit his privilege of judging, and declaring his judgment, and can appeal only to other readers, if I think myself injured.

8. In different characters we are more or less protected; to hiss a pleader at the bar would, perhaps, be deemed illegal and punishable, but to hiss a dramatick writer is justifiable by custom.

9. What is here said of the writer, extends itself naturally to the purchaser of a copy, since the one seldom suffers without the other.

10. By these liberties it is obvious, that authors and proprietors may often suffer, and sometimes unjustly: but as these liberties are encouraged and allowed for the same reason with writing itself, for the discovery and propagation of truth, though, like other human goods, they have their alloys and ill consequences; yet, as their advantages abundantly preponderate, they have never yet been abolished or restrained.

11. Thus every book, when it falls into the hands of the reader, is liable to be examined, confuted, censured, translated, and abridged; any of which may destroy the credit of the author, or hinder the sale of the book.

12. That all these liberties are allowed, and cannot be prohibited without manifest disadvantage to the publick, may be easily proved; but we shall confine ourselves to the liberty of making epitomes, which gives occasion to our present inquiry.

13. That an uninterrupted prescription confers a right, will be easily granted, especially if it appears that the prescription, pleaded in defence of that right, might at any time have been interrupted, had it not been always thought agreeable to reason and to justice.

14. The numberless abridgments that are to be found of all kinds of writings, afford sufficient evidence that they were always thought legal, for they are printed with the names of the abbreviators and publishers, and without the least appearance of a clandestine transaction. Many of the books, so abridged, were the properties of men who wanted neither wealth, nor interest, nor spirit, to sue for justice, if they had thought themselves injured. Many of these abridgments must have been made by men whom we can least suspect of illegal practices, for there are few books of late that are not abridged.

15. When bishop Burnet heard that his History of the Reformation was about to be abridged, he did not think of appealing to the court of chancery; but, to avoid any misrepresentation of his history, epitomised it himself, as he tells us in his preface.

16. But, lest it should be imagined that an author might do this rather by choice than necessity, we shall produce two more instances of the like practice, where it would certainly not have been borne, if it had been suspected of illegality. The one, in Clarendon's History, which was abridged, in 2 vols. 8vo.; and the other in bishop Burnet's History of his Own Time, abridged in the same manner. The

first of these books was the property of the university of Oxford, a body tenacious enough of their rights; the other, of bishop Burnet's heirs, whose circumstances were such as made them very sensible of any diminution of their inheritance.

17. It is observable, that both these abridgments last mentioned, with many others that might be produced, were made when the act of parliament for securing the property of copies was in force, and which, if that property was injured, afforded an easy redress: what then can be inferred from the silence and forbearance of the proprietors, but that they thought an epitome of a book no violation of the right of the proprietor?

18. That their opinion, so contrary to their own interest, was founded in reason, will appear from the nature and end of an abridgment.

19. The design of an abridgment is, to benefit mankind by facilitating the attainment of knowledge; and by contracting arguments, relations, or descriptions, into a narrow compass, to convey instruction in the easiest method, without fatiguing the attention, burdening the memory, or impairing the health of the student.

20. By this method the original author becomes, perhaps, of less value, and the proprietor's profits are diminished; but these inconveniencies give way to the advantage received by mankind, from the easier propagation of knowledge; for as an incorrect book is lawfully criticised, and false assertions justly confuted, because it is more the interest of mankind, that errour should be detected, and truth discovered,

than that the proprietors of a particular book should enjoy their profits undiminished; so a tedious volume may, no less lawfully, be abridged, because it is better that the proprietors should suffer some damage, than that the acquisition of knowledge should be obstructed with unnecessary difficulties, and the valuable hours of thousands thrown away.

21. Therefore, as he that buys the copy of a book, buys it under this condition, that it is liable to be confuted, if it is false, however his property may be affected by such a confutation; so he buys it, likewise, liable to be abridged, if it be tedious, however his property may suffer by the abridgment.

22. To abridge a book, therefore, is no violation of the right of the proprietor, because to be subject to the hazard of an abridgment was an original condition of the property.

23. Thus we see the right of abridging authors established both by reason and the customs of trade. But, perhaps, the necessity of this practice may appear more evident, from a consideration of the consequences that must probably follow from the prohibition of it.

24. If abridgments be condemned, as injurious to the proprietor of the copy, where will this argument end? Must not confutations be, likewise, prohibited for the same reason? Or, in writings of entertainment, will not criticisms, at least, be entirely suppressed, as equally hurtful to the proprietor, and certainly not more necessary to the publick?

25. Will not authors, who write for pay, and who

are rewarded, commonly, according to the bulk of their work, be tempted to fill their works with superfluities and digressions, when the dread of an abridgment is taken away, as doubtless more negligences would be committed, and more falsehoods published, if men were not restrained by the fear of censure and confutation?

26. How many useful works will the busy, the indolent, and the less wealthy part of mankind be deprived of! How few will read or purchase forty-four large volumes of the transactions of the royal society, which, in abridgment, are generally read, to the great improvement of philosophy!

27. How must general systems of sciences be written, which are nothing more than epitomes of those authors who have written on particular branches, and those works are made less necessary by such collections! Can he that destroys the profit of many copies be less criminal than he that lessens the sale of one?

28. Even to confute an erroneous book will become more difficult, since it has always been a custom to abridge the author whose assertions are examined, and, sometimes, to transcribe all the essential parts of his book. Must an inquirer after truth be debarred from the benefit of such confutations, unless he purchases the book, however useless, that gave occasion to the answer?

29. Having thus endeavoured to prove the legality of abridgments from custom, and the necessity of continuing that custom from reason, it remains only

that we show, that we have not printed the complainant's copy, but abridged it[x].

30. This will need no proof, since it will appear, upon comparing the two books, that we have reduced thirty-seven pages to thirteen of the same print.

31. Our design is, to give our readers a short view of the present controversy; and we require, that one of these two positions be proved, either that we have no right to exhibit such a view, or that we can exhibit it, without epitomising the writers of each party.

On School Chastisement

[The following argument, on school chastisement, was dictated to Mr. Boswell, who was counsel in the case. It originated in 1772, when a schoolmaster at Campbelltown was deprived, by a court of inferior jurisdiction, of his office, for alleged cruelty to his scholars. The court of session restored him. The parents or friends, whose weak indulgence had listened to their children's complaints in the first stage, now appealed to the house of lords, who reversed the decree of the court of session, and the schoolmaster was, accordingly, deprived of his situation, April 14, 1772.— Boswell, ii.]

The charge is, that this schoolmaster has used immoderate and cruel correction. Correction, in itself, is not cruel; children, being not reasonable, can be governed only by fear. To impress this fear is, therefore, one of the first duties of those who have the care of children. It is the duty of a parent; and has never been thought inconsistent with parental tenderness. It is the duty of a master, who is in his highest ex-

[x] A fair and bona fide abridgment of any book is considered a new work; and however it may injure the sale of the original, yet it is not deemed, in law, to be a piracy, or violation of the author's copyright. 1 Bro. 451. 2 Atk. 141. and Mr. Christian's note on the Commentaries, ii. 407.— Ed.

altation, when he is "loco parentis[y]." Yet, as good things become evil by excess, correction, by being immoderate, may become cruel. But, when is correction immoderate? When it is more frequent or more severe than is required, "ad monendum et docendum," for reformation and instruction. No severity is cruel which obstinacy makes necessary; for the greatest cruelty would be to desist, and leave the scholar too careless for instruction, and too much hardened for reproof. Locke, in his Treatise of Education, mentions a mother, with applause, who whipped an infant eight times before she had subdued it; for, had she stopped at the seventh act of correction, her daughter, says he, would have been ruined. The degrees of obstinacy in young minds are very different; as different must be the degrees of persevering severity. A stubborn scholar must be corrected, till he is subdued. The discipline of a school is military. There must be either unbounded license, or absolute authority. The master, who punishes, not only consults the future happiness of him who is the immediate subject of correction, but he propagates obedience through the whole school; and establishes regularity by exemplary justice. The victorious obstinacy of a single boy, would make his future endeavours of reformation or instruction totally ineffectual. Obstinacy, therefore, must never be victorious. Yet, it is well known that there, sometimes, occurs a sullen and hardy resolution, that laughs at all common punishment, and bids defiance to all common degrees of pain. Correction

[y] See Blackstone's Comment. i. 453.

must be proportionate to occasions. The flexible will be reformed by gentle discipline, and the refractory must be subdued by harsher methods. The degrees of scholastick, as of military punishment, no stated rules can ascertain. It must be enforced till it overpowers temptation; till stubborness becomes flexible, and perverseness regular. Custom and reason have, indeed, set some bounds to scholastick penalties. The schoolmaster inflicts no capital punishments; nor enforces his edicts by either death or mutilation. The civil law has wisely determined, that a master who strikes at a scholar's eye shall be considered as criminal. But punishments, however severe, that produce no lasting evil, may be just and reasonable, because they may be necessary. Such have been the punishments used by the respondent. No scholar has gone from him either blind or lame, or with any of his limbs or powers injured or impaired. They were irregular, and he punished them; they were obstinate, and he enforced his punishment. But, however provoked, he never exceeded the limits of moderation, for he inflicted nothing beyond present pain; and how much of that was required, no man is so little able to determine as those who have determined against him—the parents of the offenders. It has been said, that he used unprecedented and improper instruments of correction. Of this accusation the meaning is not very easy to be found. No instrument of correction is more proper than another, but as it is better adopted to produce present pain, without lasting mischief. Whatever were his instruments, no lasting mischief has ensued;

and, therefore, however unusual, in hands so cautious, they were proper. It has been objected, that the respondent admits the charge of cruelty, by producing no evidence to confute it. Let it be considered, that his scholars are either dispersed at large in the world, or continue to inhabit the place in which they were bred. Those who are dispersed cannot be found; those who remain are the sons of his prosecutors, and are not likely to support a man to whom their fathers are enemies. If it be supposed that the enmity of their fathers proves the justness of the charge, it must be considered how often experience shows us, that men who are angry on one ground will accuse on another; with how little kindness, in a town of low trade, a man who lives by learning is regarded; and how implicitly, where the inhabitants are not very rich, a rich man is hearkened to and followed. In a place like Campbelltown, it is easy for one of the principal inhabitants to make a party. It is easy for that party to heat themselves with imaginary grievances. It is easy for them to oppress a man poorer than themselves; and natural to assert the dignity of riches, by persisting in oppression. The argument which attempts to prove the impropriety of restoring him to the school, by alleging that he has lost the confidence of the people, is not the subject of juridical consideration; for he is to suffer, if he must suffer, not for their judgment, but for his own actions. It may be convenient for them to have another master; but it is a convenience of their own making. It would be, likewise, convenient for him to find another school; but

this convenience he cannot obtain. The question is not, what is now convenient, but what is generally right. If the people of Campbelltown be distressed by the restoration of the respondent, they are distressed only by their own fault; by turbulent passions and unreasonable desires; by tyranny, which law has defeated, and by malice, which virtue has surmounted.

Vitious Intromission

[This argument cannot be better prefaced than by Mr. Boswell's own exposition of the law of vitious intromission. He was himself an advocate at the Scotch bar, and of counsel in this case. "It was held of old, and continued for a long period, to be an established principle in Scotch law, that whoever intermeddled with the effects of a person deceased, without the interposition of legal authority to guard against embezzlement, should be subjected to pay all the debts of the deceased, as having been guilty of what was technically called *vitious intromission*. The court of session had, gradually, relaxed the strictness of this principle, where an interference proved had been inconsiderable. In the case of Wilson against Smith and Armour, in the year 1772, I had laboured to persuade the judge to return to the ancient law. It was my own sincere opinion, that they ought to adhere to it; but I had exhausted all my powers of reasoning in vain. Johnson thought as I did; and in order to assist me in my application to the court, for a revision and alteration of the judgment, he dictated to me the following argument."— Boswell, ii. 200.]

This, we are told, is a law which has its force only from the long practice of the court; and may, therefore, be suspended or modified as the court shall think proper.

Concerning the power of the court, to make or to suspend a law, we have no intention to inquire. It is sufficient, for our purpose, that every just law is dictated by reason, and that the practice of every legal court is regulated by equity. It is the quality of reason, to be invariable and constant; and of

equity, to give to one man what, in the same case, is given to another. The advantage which humanity derives from law is this: that the law gives every man a rule of action, and prescribes a mode of conduct which shall entitle him to the support and protection of society. That the law may be a rule of action, it is necessary that it be known; it is necessary that it be permanent and stable. The law is the measure of civil right; but, if the measure be changeable, the extent of the thing measured never can be settled.

To permit a law to be modified at discretion, is to leave the community without law. It is to withdraw the direction of that publick wisdom, by which the deficiencies of private understanding are to be supplied. It is to suffer the rash and ignorant to act at discretion, and then to depend for the legality of that action on the sentence of the judge. He that is thus governed lives not by law, but by opinion; not by a certain rule, to which he can apply his intention before he acts, but by an uncertain and variable opinon, which he can never know but after he has committed the act, on which that opinion shall be passed. He lives by a law, if a law it be, which he can never know before he has offended it. To this case may be justly applied that important principle, "misera est servitus ubi jus est aut incognitum aut vagum." If intromission be not criminal, till it exceeds a certain point, and that point be unsettled, and, consequently, different in different minds, the right of intromission, and the right of the creditor arising from it, are all *jura vaga*, and,

by consequence, are *jura incognita;* and the result can be no other than a *misera servitus*, an uncertainty concerning the event of action, a servile dependance on private opinion.

It may be urged, and with great plausibility, that there may be intromission without fraud; which, however true, will by no means justify an occasional and arbitrary relaxation of the law. The end of law is protection, as well as vengeance. Indeed, vengeance is never used but to strengthen protection. That society only is well governed, where life is freed from danger and from suspicion; where possession is so sheltered by salutary prohibitions, that violation is prevented more frequently than punished. Such a prohibition was this, while it operated with its original force. The creditor of the deceased was not only without loss, but without fear. He was not to seek a remedy for an injury suffered; for injury was warded off.

As the law has been sometimes administered, it lays us open to wounds, because it is imagined to have the power of healing. To punish fraud, when it is detected, is the proper art of vindictive justice; but to prevent frauds, and make punishment unnecessary, is the great employment of legislative wisdom. To permit intromission, and to punish fraud, is to make law no better than a pitfall. To tread upon the brink is safe; but to come a step further is destruction. But, surely, it is better to enclose the gulf, and hinder all access, than by encouraging us to advance a little, to entice us after-

wards a little further, and let us perceive our folly only by our destruction.

As law supplies the weak with adventitious strength, it likewise enlightens the ignorant with extrinsick understanding. Law teaches us to know when we commit injury and when we suffer it. It fixes certain marks upon actions, by which we are admonished to do or to forbear them. "Qui sibi bene temperat in licitis," says one of the fathers, "nunquam cadet in illicita:" he who never intromits at all, will never intromit with fraudulent intentions.

The relaxation of the law against vitious intromission has been very favourably represented by a great master of jurisprudence[z], whose words have been exhibited with unnecessary pomp, and seem to be considered as irresistibly decisive. The great moment of his authority makes it necessary to examine his position: 'Some ages ago,' says he, 'before the ferocity of the inhabitants of this part of the island was subdued, the utmost severity of the civil law was necessary, to restrain individuals from plundering each other. Thus, the man who intermeddled irregularly with the moveables of a person deceased, was subjected to all the debts of the deceased, without limitation. This makes a branch of the law of Scotland, known by the name of vitious intromission: and so rigidly was this regulation applied in our courts of law, that the most trifling moveable abstracted mala fide, subjected the intermeddler to the foregoing consequences, which

[z] Lord Kames, in his Historical Law Tracts.

proved, in many instances, a most rigorous punishment. But this severity was necessary, in order to subdue the undisciplined nature of our people. It is extremely remarkable, that, in proportion to our improvement in manners, this regulation has been gradually softened, and applied by our sovereign court with a sparing hand.'

I find myself under the necessity of observing, that this learned and judicious writer has not accurately distinguished the deficiencies and demands of the different conditions of human life, which, from a degree of savageness and independence, in which all laws are vain, passes, or may pass, by innumerable gradations, to a state of reciprocal benignity, in which laws shall be no longer necessary. Men are first wild and unsocial, living each man to himself, taking from the weak, and losing to the strong. In their first coalitions of society, much of this original savageness is retained. Of general happiness, the product of general confidence, there is yet no thought. Men continue to prosecute their own advantages by the nearest way; and the utmost severity of the civil law is necessary to restrain individuals from plundering each other. The restraints then necessary, are restraints from plunder, from acts of publick violence, and undisguised oppression. The ferocity of our ancestors, as of all other nations, produced not fraud, but rapine. They had not yet learned to cheat, and attempted only to rob. As manners grow more polished, with the knowledge of good, men attain, likewise, dexterity in evil. Open rapine becomes less frequent,

and violence gives way to cunning. Those who before invaded pastures and stormed houses, now begin to enrich themselves by unequal contracts and fraudulent intromissions. It is not against the violence of ferocity, but the circumventions of deceit, that this law was framed; and, I am afraid, the increase of commerce, and the incessant struggle for riches, which commerce excites, give us no prospect of an end speedily to be expected of artifice and fraud. It, therefore, seems to be no very conclusive reasoning, which connects those two propositions: —'the nation is become less ferocious, and, therefore, the laws against fraud and covin shall be relaxed.'

Whatever reason may have influenced the judges to a relaxation of the law, it was not that the nation was grown less fierce; and, I am afraid, it cannot be affirmed, that it is grown less fraudulent.

Since this law has been represented as rigorously and unreasonably penal, it seems not improper to consider, what are the conditions and qualities that make the justice or propriety of a penal law.

To make a penal law reasonable and just, two conditions are necessary, and two proper. It is necessary that the law should be adequate to its end; that, if it be observed, it shall prevent the evil against which it is directed. It is, secondly, necessary that the end of the law be of such importance as to deserve the security of a penal sanction. The other conditions of a penal law, which, though not absolutely necessary, are, to a very high degree, fit, are, that to the moral violation of the law there are

many temptations, and, that of the physical observance there is great facility.

All these conditions apparently concur to justify the law which we are now considering. Its end is the security of property, and property very often of great value. The method by which it effects the security is efficacious, because it admits, in its original rigour, no gradations of injury; but keeps guilt and innocence apart, by a distinct and definite limitation. He that intromits, is criminal; he that intromits not, is innocent. Of the two secondary considerations it cannot be denied that both are in our favour. The temptation to intromit is frequent and strong; so strong, and so frequent, as to require the utmost activity of justice, and vigilance of caution, to withstand its prevalence: and the method by which a man may entitle himself to legal intromission, is so open and so facile, that to neglect it is a proof of fraudulent intention; for why should a man omit to do (but for reasons which he will not confess) that which he can do so easily, and that which he knows to be required by the law? If temptation were rare, a penal law might be deemed unnecessary. If the duty, enjoined by the law, were of difficult performance, omission, though it could not be justified, might be pitied. But in the present case, neither equity nor compassion operate against it. An useful, a necessary law is broken, not only without a reasonable motive, but with all the inducements to obedience that can be derived from safety and facility.

I, therefore, return to my original position, that

a law, to have its effects, must be permanent and stable. It may be said, in the language of the schools, "lex non recipit majus et minus;" we may have a law, or we may have no law, but we cannot have half a law. We must either have a rule of action, or be permitted to act by discretion and by chance. Deviations from the law must be uniformly punished, or no man can be certain when he shall be safe.

That from the rigour of the original institution this court has sometimes departed, cannot be denied. But as it is evident that such deviations as they, make law uncertain, make life unsafe, I hope, that of departing from it there will now be an end; that the wisdom of our ancestors will be treated with due reverence; and that consistent and steady decisions will furnish the people with a rule of action, and leave fraud and fraudulent intromissions no future hope of impunity or escape[a].

On Lay Patronage

IN THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

[Dr. Johnson has treated this delicate and difficult subject with unusual acuteness. As Mr. Boswell has recorded the argument, we will make use, once more, of his words to introduce it; observing, by the way, that it did not convince Mr. Boswell's own mind, who was himself a lay patron. "I introduced a question which has been much agitated in the church of Scotland, whether the claim of lay patrons to present ministers to parishes be well founded; and, supposing it to be well founded, whether it ought to be exercised without the concurrence of the people? That church is composed of a series of judicatures; a presbytery, a synod, and, finally, a general assembly; before all of which this matter

[a] "This masterly argument on vitious intromission, after being prefaced and concluded with some sentences of my own," says Mr. Boswell, "and garnished with the usual formularies, was actually printed, and laid before the lords of session, but without success."— Boswell, ii. 207.

may be contended; and, in some cases, the presbytery having refused to induct or *settle*, as they call it, the person presented by the patron, it has been found necessary to appeal to the general assembly. Johnson said, I might see the subject well treated in the Defence of Pluralities; and although he thought that a patron should exercise his right with tenderness to the inclinations of the people of a parish, he was very clear as to his right. Then supposing the question to be pleaded before the general assembly, he dictated to me what follows."— Boswell, ii. 248.]

Against the right of patrons is commonly opposed, by the inferiour judicatures, the plea of conscience. Their conscience tells them, that the people ought to choose their pastor; their conscience tells them, that they ought not to impose upon a congregation a minister ungrateful and unacceptable to his auditors. Conscience is nothing more than a conviction, felt by ourselves, of something to be done, or something to be avoided; and in questions of simple unperplexed morality, conscience is very often a guide that may be trusted. But before conscience can determine, the state of the question is supposed to be completely known. In questions of law, or of fact, conscience is very often confounded with opinion. No man's conscience can tell him the rights of another man; they must be known by rational investigation, or historical inquiry. Opinion, which he that holds it may call his conscience, may teach some men that religion would be promoted, and quiet preserved, by granting to the people universally the choice of their ministers. But it is a conscience very ill informed that violates the rights of one man, for the convenience of another. Religion cannot be promoted by injustice: and it was never yet found that a popular election was very quietly transacted.

That justice would be violated by transferring to the people the right of patronage, is apparent to all who know whence that right had its original. The right of patronage was not at first a privilege torn by power from unresisting poverty. It is not an authority, at first usurped in times of ignorance, and established only by succession and by precedents. It is not a grant capriciously made from a higher tyrant to a lower. It is a right dearly purchased by the first possessours, and justly inherited by those that succeed them. When christianity was established in this island, a regular mode of worship was prescribed. Publick worship requires a publick place; and the proprietors of lands, as they were converted, built churches for their families and their vassals. For the maintenance of ministers they settled a certain portion of their lands; and a district, through which each minister was required to extend his care, was, by that circumscription, constituted a parish. This is a position so generally received in England, that the extent of a manor and of a parish are regularly received for each other. The churches which the proprietors of lands had thus built and thus endowed, they justly thought themselves entitled to provide with ministers; and, where the episcopal government prevails, the bishop has no power to reject a man nominated by the patron, but for some crime that might exclude him from the priesthood. For, the endowment of the church being the gift of the landlord, he was, consequently, at liberty to give it, according to his choice, to any man capable of performing the holy offices. The

people did not choose him, because the people did not pay him.

We hear it sometimes urged, that this original right is passed out of memory, and is obliterated and obscured by many translations of property and changes of government; that scarce any church is now in the hands of the heirs of the builders; and that the present persons have entered subsequently upon the pretended rights by a thousand accidental and unknown causes. Much of this, perhaps, is true. But how is the right of patronage extinguished? If the right followed the lands, it is possessed, by the same equity by which the lands are possessed. It is, in effect, part of the manor, and protected by the same laws with every other privilege. Let us suppose an estate forfeited by treason, and granted by the crown to a new family. With the lands were forfeited all the rights appendant to those lands; by the same power that grants the lands, the rights also are granted. The right, lost to the patron, falls not to the people, but is either retained by the crown, or, what to the people is the same thing, is by the crown given away. Let it change hands ever so often, it is possessed by him that receives it, with the same right as it was conveyed. It may, indeed, like all our possessions, be forcibly seized or fraudulently obtained. But no injury is still done to the people; for what they never had, they have never lost. Caius may usurp the right of Titius, but neither Caius nor Titius injure the people; and no man's conscience, however tender or however active, can prompt him to restore what may be proved to

have been never taken away. Supposing, what I think cannot be proved, that a popular election of ministers were to be desired, our desires are not the measure of equity. It were to be desired, that power should be only in the hands of the merciful, and riches in the possession of the generous; but the law must leave both riches and power where it finds them; and must often leave riches with the covetous, and power with the cruel. Convenience may be a rule in little things, where no other rule has been established. But, as the great end of government is to give every man his own, no inconvenience is greater than that of making right uncertain. Nor is any man more an enemy to publick peace, than he who fills weak heads with imaginary claims, and breaks the series of civil subordination, by inciting the lower classes of mankind to encroach upon the higher.

Having thus shown that the right of patronage, being originally purchased, may be legally transferred, and that it is now in the hands of lawful possessours, at least as certainly as any other right, we have left the advocates of the people no other plea than that of convenience. Let us, therefore, now consider what the people would really gain by a general abolition of the right of patronage. What is most to be desired by such a change is, that the country should be supplied with better ministers. But why should we suppose that the parish will make a wiser choice than the patron? If we suppose mankind actuated by interest, the patron is more likely to choose with caution, because he will suffer more by choosing wrong. By the deficiencies of his

minister, or by his vices, he is equally offended with the rest of the congregation; but he will have this reason more to lament them, that they will be imputed to his absurdity or corruption. The qualifications of a minister are well known to be learning and piety. Of his learning the patron is probably the only judge in the parish; and of his piety not less a judge than others; and is more likely to inquire minutely and diligently before he gives a presentation, than one of the parochial rabble, who can give nothing but a vote. It may be urged, that though the parish might not choose better ministers, they would, at least, choose ministers whom they like better, and who would, therefore, officiate with greater efficacy. That ignorance and perverseness should always obtain what they like, was never considered as the end of government; of which it is the great and standing benefit, that the wise see for the simple, and the regular act for the capricious. But that this argument supposes the people capable of judging, and resolute to act according to their best judgments, though this be sufficiently absurd, it is not all its absurdity. It supposes not only wisdom, but unanimity in those, who upon no other occasions are unanimous or wise. If by some strange concurrence all the voices of a parish should unite in the choice of any single man, though I could not charge the patron with injustice for presenting a minister, I should censure him as unkind and injudicious. But it is evident, that, as in all other popular elections, there will be contrariety of judgment and acrimony of passion; a parish upon every vacancy would break

into factions, and the contest for the choice of a minister would set neighbours at variance, and bring discord into families. The minister would be taught all the arts of a candidate, would flatter some, and bribe others; and the electors, as in all other cases, would call for holy-days and ale, and break the heads of each other during the jollity of the canvass. The time must, however, come at last, when one of the factions must prevail, and one of the ministers get possession of the church. On what terms does he enter upon his ministry, but those of enmity with half his parish? By what prudence or what diligence can he hope to conciliate the affections of that party, by whose defeat he has obtained his living? Every man who voted against him will enter the church with hanging head and downcast eyes, afraid to encounter that neighbour by whose vote and influence he has been overpowered. He will hate his neighbour for opposing him, and his minister for having prospered by the opposition; and, as he will never see him but with pain, he will never see him but with hatred. Of a minister presented by the patron, the parish has seldom any thing worse to say, than that they do not know him. Of a minister chosen by a popular contest, all those who do not favour him, have nursed up in their bosoms principles of hatred and reasons of rejection. Anger is excited principally by pride. The pride of a common man is very little exasperated by the supposed usurpation of an acknowledged superiour. He bears only his little share of a general evil, and suffers in common with the whole parish; but when the contest is between

equals, the defeat has many aggravations, and he that is defeated by his next neighbour, is seldom satisfied without some revenge: and it is hard to say, what bitterness of malignity would prevail in a parish, where these elections should happen to be frequent, and the enmity of opposition should be rekindled before it had cooled.

On Pulpit Censure

[This case shall be introduced by Mr. Boswell himself. "In the course of a contested election for the borough of Dumfermline, which I attended as one of my friend Sir Archibald Campbell's counsel, one of his political agents, who was charged with having been unfaithful to his employer, and having deserted to the opposite party for a pecuniary reward, attacked, very rudely, in the newspapers, the reverend James Thompson, one of the ministers of that place, on account of a supposed allusion to him in one of his sermons. Upon this, the minister, on a subsequent Sunday, arraigned him by name, from the pulpit, with some severity; and the agent, after the sermon was over, rose up and asked the minister aloud, 'What bribe he had received for telling so many lies from the chair of verity.' I was present at this very extraordinary scene. The person arraigned, and his father and brother, who also had a share both of the reproof from the pulpit, and in the retaliation, brought an action against Mr. Thompson, in the court of session, for defamation and damages, and I was one of the counsel for the reverend defendant. The liberty of the pulpit was our great ground of defence; but we argued also on the provocation of the previous attack, and on the instant retaliation. The court of session, however, the fifteen judges, who are at the same time the jury, decided against the minister, contrary to my humble opinion; and several of them expressed themselves with indignation against him. He was an aged gentleman, formerly a military chaplain, and a man of high spirit and honour. He wished to bring the cause by appeal before the house of lords, but was dissuaded by the advice of the noble person, who lately presided so ably in that most honourable house, and who was then attorney-general. Johnson was satisfied that the judgment was wrong, and dictated to me the following argument in confutation of it." As our readers will, no doubt, be pleased to read the opinion of so eminent a man as lord Thurlow, in immediate comparison with one on the same subject by Johnson, we refer them to Boswell's Life, vol. iii. p. 59. edit. 1802; from whence the above extract is taken.]

Of the censure pronounced from the pulpit, our

determination must be formed, as in other cases, by a consideration of the act itself, and the particular circumstances with which it is invested.

The right of censure and rebuke seems necessarily appendant to the pastoral office. He, to whom the care of a congregation is entrusted, is considered as the shepherd of a flock, as the teacher of a school, as the father of a family. As a shepherd, tending not his own sheep but those of his master, he is answerable for those that stray, and that lose themselves by straying. But no man can be answerable for losses which he has not power to prevent, or for vagrancy which he has not authority to restrain.

As a teacher giving instruction for wages, and liable to reproach, if those whom he undertakes to inform make no proficiency, he must have the power of enforcing attendance, of awakening negligence, and repressing contradiction.

As a father, he possesses the paternal authority of admonition, rebuke and punishment. He cannot, without reducing his office to an empty name, be hindered from the exercise of any practice necessary to stimulate the idle, to reform the vicious, to check the petulant, and correct the stubborn.

If we inquire into the practice of the primitive church, we shall, I believe, find the ministers of the word exercising the whole authority of this complicated character. We shall find them not only encouraging the good by exhortation, but terrifying the wicked by reproof and denunciation. In the earliest ages of the church, while religion was yet pure from secular advantages, the punishment of

sinners was publick censure, and open penance; penalties inflicted merely by ecclesiastical authority, at a time when the church had yet no help from the civil power; while the hand of the magistrate lifted only the rod of persecution; and when governours were ready to afford a refuge to all those who fled from clerical authority.

That the church, therefore, had once a power of publick censure is evident, because that power was frequently exercised. That it borrowed not its power from the civil authority is, likewise, certain, because civil authority was at that time its enemy.

The hour came, at length, when, after three hundred years of struggle and distress, truth took possession of imperial power, and the civil laws lent their aid to the ecclesiastical constitutions. The magistrate, from that time, cooperated with the priest, and clerical sentences were made efficacious by secular force. But the state, when it came to the assistance of the church, had no intention to diminish its authority. Those rebukes and those censures, which were lawful before, were lawful still. But they had hitherto operated only upon voluntary submission. The refractory and contemptuous were at first in no danger of temporal severities, except what they might suffer from the reproaches of conscience, or the detestation of their fellow christians. When religion obtained the support of law, if admonitions and censures had no effect, they were seconded by the magistrates with coercion and punishment.

It, therefore, appears, from ecclesiastical history, that the right of inflicting shame by publick cen-

sure has been always considered as inherent in the church; and that this right was not conferred by the civil power; for it was exercised when the civil power operated against it. By the civil power it was never taken away; for the christian magistrate interposed his office, not to rescue sinners from censure, but to supply more powerful means of reformation; to add pain where shame was insufficient; and when men were proclaimed unworthy of the society of the faithful, to restrain them by imprisonment, from spreading abroad the contagion of wickedness.

It is not improbable, that from this acknowledged power of publick censure, grew, in time, the practice of auricular confession. Those who dreaded the blast of publick reprehension, were willing to submit themselves to the priest, by a private accusation of themselves; and to obtain a reconciliation with the church by a kind of clandestine absolution and invisible penance; conditions with which the priest would, in times of ignorance and corruption, easily comply, as they increased his influence, by adding the knowledge of secret sins to that of notorious offences, and enlarged his authority, by making him the sole arbiter of the terms of reconcilement.

From this bondage the Reformation set us free. The minister has no longer power to press into the retirements of conscience, or torture us by interrogatories, or put himself in possession of our secrets and our lives. But though we have thus controlled his usurpations, his just and original power remains unimpaired. He may still see, though he may not pry; he may yet hear, though he may not question.

And that knowledge which his eyes and ears force upon him, it is still his duty to use, for the benefit of his flock. A father, who lives near a wicked neighbour, may forbid a son to frequent his company. A minister, who has in his congregation a man of open and scandalous wickedness, may warn his parishioners to shun his conversation. To warn them is not only lawful, but not to warn them would be criminal. He may warn them, one by one, in friendly converse, or by a parochial visitation. But if he may warn each man singly, what shall forbid him to warn them altogether? Of that which is to be made known to all, how is there any difference, whether it be communicated to each singly, or to all together? What is known to all, must necessarily be publick, whether it shall be publick at once, or publick by degrees, is the only question. And of a sudden and solemn publication the impression is deeper, and the warning more effectual.

It may easily be urged, if a minister be thus left at liberty to delate sinners from the pulpit, and to publish, at will, the crimes of a parishioner, he may often blast the innocent and distress the timorous. He may be suspicious, and condemn without evidence; he may be rash, and judge without examination; he may be severe, and treat slight offences with too much harshness; he may be malignant and partial, and gratify his private interest or resentment under the shelter of his pastoral character.

Of all this there is possibility, and of all this there is danger. But if possibility of evil be to exclude good, no good ever can be done. If nothing is to

be attempted in which there is danger, we must all sink into hopeless inactivity. The evils that may be feared from this practice arise not from any defect in the institution, but from the infirmities of human nature. Power, in whatever hands it is placed, will be sometimes improperly exerted; yet courts of law must judge, though they will sometimes judge amiss. A father must instruct his children, though he himself may often want instruction. A minister must censure sinners, though his censure may be sometimes erroneous by want of judgment, and sometimes unjust by want of honesty.

If we examine the circumstances of the present case, we shall find the sentences neither erroneous nor unjust; we shall find no breach of private confidence, no intrusion into secret transactions. The fact was notorious and indubitable; so easy to be proved, that no proof was desired. The act was base and treacherous, the perpetration insolent and open, and the example naturally mischievous. The minister, however, being retired and recluse, had not yet heard what was publickly known throughout the parish; and, on occasion of a publick election, warned his people, according to his duty, against the crimes which publick elections frequently produce. His warning was felt by one of his parishioners, as pointed particularly at himself. But instead of producing, as might be wished, private compunction and immediate reformation, it kindled only rage and resentment. He charged his minister, in a publick paper, with scandal, defamation, and falsehood. The minister, thus reproached, had his own character to vindicate, upon which his pastoral authority must necessarily depend. To be charged with a

defamatory lie is an injury which no man patiently endures in common life. To be charged with polluting the pastoral office with scandal and falsehood, was a violation of character still more atrocious, as it affected not only his personal but his clerical veracity. His indignation naturally rose in proportion to his honesty, and, with all the fortitude of injured honesty, he dared this calumniator in the church, and at once exonerated himself from censure, and rescued his flock from deception and from danger. The man, whom he accuses, pretends not to be innocent; or, at least, only pretends, for he declines a trial. The crime of which he is accused has frequent opportunities, and strong temptations. It has already spread far, with much depravation of private morals, and much injury to publick happiness.

To warn the people, therefore, against it, was not wanton and officious, but necessary and pastoral.

What then is the fault with which this worthy minister is charged? He has usurped no dominion over conscience. He has exerted no authority in support of doubtful and controverted opinions. He has not dragged into light a bashful and corrigible sinner. His censure was directed against a breach of morality, against an act which no man justifies. The man who appropriated this censure to himself, is evidently and notoriously guilty. His consciousness of his own wickedness incited him to attack his faithful reprover with open insolence and printed accusations. Such an attack made defence necessary; and we hope it will be, at last, decided, that the means of defence were just and lawful[b].

[b] This nervous argument was honoured by the particular approbation of Mr. Burke.— Boswell, iii. 62.

DU HALDE'S HISTORY OF CHINA

LETTER OF 1738

THERE are few nations in the world more talked of, or less known, than the Chinese. The confused and imperfect account which travellers have given of their grandeur, their sciences, and their policy, have, hitherto, excited admiration, but have not been sufficient to satisfy even a superficial curiosity. I, therefore, return you my thanks for having undertaken, at so great an expense, to convey to English readers the most copious and accurate account, yet published, of that remote and celebrated people, whose antiquity, magnificence, power, wisdom, peculiar customs, and excellent constitution, undoubtedly deserve the attention of the publick.

As the satisfaction found in reading descriptions of distant countries arises from a comparison which every reader naturally makes, between the ideas which he receives from the relation, and those which were familiar to him before; or, in other words, between the countries with which he is acquainted, and that which the author displays to his imagination; so it varies according to the likeness or dissimilitude of the manners of the two nations. Any custom or law, unheard and unthought of before, strikes us with that surprise which is the effect of novelty; but a practice conformable to our own pleases us, because it flatters our self-love, by showing us that our opinions are approved by the general concurrence of mankind. Of these two pleasures, the first is more violent, the other more lasting; the first seems to partake more of instinct than reason,

and is not easily to be explained, or defined; the latter has its foundation in good sense and reflection, and evidently depends on the same principles with most human passions.

An attentive reader will frequently feel each of these agreeable emotions in the perusal of Du Halde. He will find a calm, peaceful satisfaction, when he reads the moral precepts and wise instructions of the Chinese sages; he will find that virtue is in every place the same; and will look with new contempt on those wild reasoners, who affirm, that morality is merely ideal, and that the distinctions between good and ill are wholly chimerical.

But he will enjoy all the pleasure that novelty can afford, when he becomes acquainted with the Chinese government and constitution; he will be amazed to find that there is a country where nobility and knowledge are the same, where men advance in rank as they advance in learning, and promotion is the effect of virtuous industry; where no man thinks ignorance a mark of greatness, or laziness the privilege of high birth.

His surprise will be still heightened by the relations he will there meet with, of honest ministers, who, however incredible it may seem, have been seen more than once in that monarchy, and have adventured to admonish the emperours of any deviation from the laws of their country, or any errour in their conduct, that has endangered either their own safety, or the happiness of their people. He will read of emperours, who, when they have been addressed in this manner, have neither stormed, nor

threatened, nor kicked their ministers, nor thought it majestick to be obstinate in the wrong; but have, with a greatness of mind worthy of a Chinese monarch, brought their actions willingly to the test of reason, law, and morality, and scorned to exert their power in defence of that which they could not support by argument.

I must confess my wonder at these relations was very great, and had been much greater, had I not often entertained my imagination with an instance of the like conduct in a prince of England, on an occasion that happened not quite a century ago, and which I shall relate, that so remarkable an example of spirit and firmness in a subject, and of conviction and compliance in a prince, may not be forgotten. And I hope you will look upon this letter as intended to do honour to my country, and not to serve your interest by promoting your undertaking.

The prince, at the christening of his first son, had appointed a noble duke to stand as proxy for the father of the princess, without regard to the claim of a marquis, (heir apparent to a higher title,) to whom, as lord of the bedchamber, then in waiting, that honour properly belonged.——The marquis was wholly unacquainted with the affair, till he heard, at dinner, the duke's health drunk, by the name of the prince he was that evening to represent. This he took an opportunity, after dinner, of inquiring the reason of, and was informed, by the prince's treasurer, of his highness's intention. The marquis immediately declared, that he thought his right invaded, and his honour injured, which he could not

bear without requiring satisfaction from the usurper of his privileges; nor would he longer serve a prince who paid no regard to his lawful pretensions. The treasurer could not deny that the marquis's claim was incontestable, and, by his permission, acquainted the prince with his resolution. The prince, thereupon, sending for the marquis, demanded, with a resentful and imperious air, how he could dispute his commands, and by what authority he presumed to control him in the management of his own family, and the christening of his own son. The marquis answered, that he did not encroach upon the prince's right, but only defended his own: that he thought his honour concerned, and, as he was a young man, would not enter the world with the loss of his reputation. The prince, exasperated to a very high degree, repeated his commands; but the marquis, with a spirit and firmness not to be depressed or shaken, persisted in his determination to assert his claim, and concluded with declaring that he would do himself the justice that was denied him; and that not the prince himself should trample on his character. He was then ordered to withdraw, and the duke coming to him, assured him, that the honour was offered him, unasked; that when he accepted it, he was not informed of his lordship's claim, and that now he very willingly resigned it. The marquis very gracefully acknowledged the civility of the duke's expressions, and declared himself satisfied with his grace's conduct; but thought it inconsistent with his honour to accept the representation as a cession of the duke, or on any other terms than as his own ac-

knowledged right. The prince, being informed of the whole conversation, and having, upon inquiry, found all the precedents on the marquis's side, thought it below his dignity to persist in an errour, and, restoring the marquis to his right upon his own conditions, continued him in his favour, believing that he might safely trust his affairs in the hands of a man, who had so nice a sense of honour, and so much spirit to assert it.

EUBULIS.

THE DUTCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH[c]

REVIEW OF THE ACCOUNT OF THE CONDUCT OF

THE universal regard, which is paid by mankind to such accounts of publick transactions as have been written by those who were engaged in them, may be, with great probability, ascribed to that ardent love of truth, which nature has kindled in the breast of man, and which remains even where every other laudable passion is extinguished. We cannot but read such narratives with uncommon curiosity, because we consider the writer as indubitably possessed of the ability to give us just representations, and do not always reflect, that, very often, proportionate to the opportunities of knowing the truth, are the temptations to disguise it.

Authors of this kind have, at least, an incontestable superiority over those whose passions are the same, and whose knowledge is less. It is evident that those who write in their own defence, discover

[c] From the Gentleman's Magazine, 1742.

often more impartiality, and less contempt of evidence, than the advocates which faction or interest have raised in their favour.

It is, however, to be remembered, that the parent of all memoirs, is the ambition of being distinguished from the herd of mankind, and the fear of either infamy or oblivion, passions which cannot but have some degree of influence, and which may, at least, affect the writer's choice of facts, though they may not prevail upon him to advance known falsehoods. He may aggravate or extenuate particular circumstances, though he preserves the general transaction; as the general likeness may be preserved in painting, though a blemish is hid or a beauty improved.

Every man that is solicitous about the esteem of others, is, in a great degree, desirous of his own, and makes, by consequence, his first apology for his conduct to himself; and when he has once deceived his own heart, which is, for the greatest part, too easy a task, he propagates the deceit in the world, without reluctance or consciousness of falsehood.

But to what purpose, it may be asked, are such reflections, except to produce a general incredulity, and to make history of no use? The man who knows not the truth cannot, and he who knows it, will not tell it; what then remains, but to distrust every relation, and live in perpetual negligence of past events; or, what is still more disagreeable, in perpetual suspense?

That by such remarks some incredulity is, indeed,

produced, cannot be denied; but distrust is a necessary qualification of a student in history. Distrust quickens his discernment of different degrees of probability, animates his search after evidence, and, perhaps, heightens his pleasure at the discovery of truth; for truth, though not always obvious, is generally discoverable; nor is it any where more likely to be found than in private memoirs, which are generally published at a time when any gross falsehood may be detected by living witnesses, and which always contain a thousand incidents, of which the writer could not have acquired a certain knowledge, and which he has no reason for disguising.

Such is the account lately published by the dutchess of Marlborough, of her own conduct, by which those who are very little concerned about the character which it is principally intended to preserve or to retrieve, may be entertained and instructed. By the perusal of this account, the inquirer into human nature may obtain an intimate acquaintance with the characters of those whose names have crowded the latest histories, and discover the relation between their minds and their actions. The historian may trace the progress of great transactions, and discover the secret causes of important events. And, to mention one use more, the polite writer may learn an unaffected dignity of style, and an artful simplicity of narration.

The method of confirming her relation, by inserting, at length, the letters that every transaction occasioned, has not only set the greatest part of

the work above the danger of confutation, but has added to the entertainment of the reader, who has now the satisfaction of forming to himself the characters of the actors, and judging how nearly such, as have hitherto been given of them, agree with those which they now give of themselves.

Even of those whose letters could not be made publick, we have a more exact knowledge than can be expected from general histories, because we see them in their private apartments, in their careless hours, and observe those actions in which they indulged their own inclinations, without any regard to censure or applause.

Thus it is, that we are made acquainted with the disposition of king William, of whom it may be collected, from various instances, that he was arbitrary, insolent, gloomy, rapacious, and brutal; that he was, at all times, disposed to play the tyrant; that he had, neither in great things, nor in small, the manners of a gentleman; that he was capable of gaining money by mean artifices, and that he only regarded his promise when it was his interest to keep it.

There are, doubtless, great numbers who will be offended with this delineation of the mind of the immortal William, but they whose honesty or sense enables them to consider impartially the events of his reign, will now be enabled to discover the reason of the frequent oppositions which he encountered, and of the personal affronts which he was, sometimes, forced to endure. They will observe, that it is not always sufficient to do right, and that it is

often necessary to add gracefulness to virtue. They will recollect how vain it is to endeavour to gain men by great qualities, while our cursory behaviour is insolent and offensive; and that those may be disgusted by little things, who can scarcely be pleased with great.

Charles the second, by his affability and politeness, made himself the idol of the nation, which he betrayed and sold. William the third was, for his insolence and brutality, hated by that people, which he protected and enriched: — had the best part of these two characters been united in one prince, the house of Bourbon had fallen before him.

It is not without pain, that the reader observes a shade encroaching upon the light with which the memory of queen Mary has been hitherto invested— the popular, the beneficent, the pious, the celestial queen Mary, from whose presence none ever withdrew without an addition to his happiness. What can be charged upon this delight of human kind? Nothing less than that *she wanted bowels*, and was insolent with her power; that she was resentful, and pertinacious in her resentment; that she descended to mean acts of revenge, when heavier vengeance was not in her power; that she was desirous of controlling where she had no authority, and backward to forgive, even when she had no real injury to complain of.

This is a character so different from all those that have been, hitherto, given of this celebrated princess, that the reader stands in suspense, till he considers the inconsistencies in human conduct,

remembers that no virtue is without its weakness, and considers that queen Mary's character has, hitherto, had this great advantage, that it has only been compared with those of kings.

The greatest number of the letters inserted in this account, were written by queen Anne, of which it may be truly observed, that they will be equally useful for the confutation of those who have exalted or depressed her character. They are written with great purity and correctness, without any forced expressions, affected phrases, or unnatural sentiments; and show uncommon clearness of understanding, tenderness of affection, and rectitude of intention; but discover, at the same time, a temper timorous, anxious, and impatient of misfortune; a tendency to burst into complaints, helpless dependance on the affection of others, and a weak desire of moving compassion. There is, indeed, nothing insolent or overbearing; but then there is nothing great, or firm, or regal; nothing that enforces obedience and respect, or which does not rather invite opposition and petulance. She seems born for friendship, not for government; and to be unable to regulate the conduct of others, otherwise than by her own example.

That this character is just, appears from the occurrences in her reign, in which the nation was governed, for many years, by a party whose principles she detested, but whose influence she knew not how to obviate, and to whose schemes she was subservient against her inclination.

The charge of tyrannising over her, which was

made, by turns, against each party, proves that, in the opinion of both, she was easily to be governed; and though it may be supposed, that the letters here published were selected with some regard to respect and ceremony, it appears, plainly enough, from them, that she was what she has been represented, little more than the slave of the Marlborough family.

The inferiour characters, as they are of less importance, are less accurately delineated; the picture of Harley is, at least, partially drawn: all the deformities are heightened, and the beauties, for beauties of mind he certainly had, are entirely omitted.

Review of Memoirs of the Court of Augustus

BY THOMAS BLACKWELL, J. U. D.

PRINCIPAL OF MARISCHAL COLLEGE, IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN[d]

The first effect, which this book has upon the reader, is that of disgusting him with the author's vanity. He endeavours to persuade the world, that here are some new treasures of literature spread before his eyes; that something is discovered, which, to this happy day, had been concealed in darkness; that, by his diligence, time has been robbed of some valuable monument which he was on the point of devouring; and that names and facts, doomed to oblivion, are now restored to fame.

How must the unlearned reader be surprised, when he shall be told that Mr. Blackwell has neither digged in the ruins of any demolished city, nor found out the way to the library of Fez; nor had a

[d] Literary Magazine, vol. i. p. 41. 1756.

single book in his hands, that has not been in the possession of every man that was inclined to read it, for years and ages; and that his book relates to a people, who, above all others, have furnished employment to the studious, and amusements to the idle; who have scarcely left behind them a coin or a stone, which has not been examined and explained a thousand times; and whose dress, and food, and household stuff, it has been the pride of learning to understand.

A man need not fear to incur the imputation of vicious diffidence or affected humility, who should have forborne to promise many novelties, when he perceived such multitudes of writers possessed of the same materials, and intent upon the same purpose. Mr. Blackwell knows well the opinion of Horace, concerning those that open their undertakings with magnificent promises; and he knows, likewise, the dictates of common sense and common honesty, names of greater authority than that of Horace, who direct, that no man should promise what he cannot perform.

I do not mean to declare, that this volume has nothing new, or that the labours of those who have gone before our author, have made his performance an useless addition to the burden of literature. New works may be constructed with old materials; the disposition of the parts may show contrivance; the ornaments interspersed may discover elegance.

It is not always without good effect, that men, of proper qualifications, write, in succession, on the same subject, even when the latter add nothing to

the information given by the former; for the same ideas may be delivered more intelligibly or more delightfully by one than by another, or with attractions that may lure minds of a different form. No writer pleases all, and every writer may please some.

But, after all, to inherit is not to acquire; to decorate is not to make; and the man, who had nothing to do but to read the ancient authors, who mention the Roman affairs, and reduce them to common places, ought not to boast himself as a great benefactor to the studious world.

After a preface of boast, and a letter of flattery, in which he seems to imitate the address of Horace, in his "vile potabis modicis Sabinum"—he opens his book with telling us, that the "Roman republic, after the horrible proscription, was no more at *bleeding Rome*. The regal power of her consuls, the authority of her senate, and the majesty of her people, were now trampled under foot; these [for those] divine laws and hallowed customs, that had been the essence of her constitution— were set at nought, and her best friends were lying exposed in their blood."

These were surely very dismal times to those who suffered; but I know not, why any one but a schoolboy, in his declamation, should whine over the commonwealth of Rome, which grew great only by the misery of the rest of mankind. The Romans, like others, as soon as they grew rich, grew corrupt, and, in their corruption, sold the lives and freedoms of themselves, and of one another.

"About this time, Brutus had his patience put

to the *highest* trial: he had been married to Clodia; but whether the family did not please him, or whether he was dissatisfied with the lady's behaviour during his absence, he soon entertained thoughts of a separation. *This raised a good deal of talk*, and the women of the Clodian family inveighed bitterly against Brutus—but he married Portia, who was worthy of such a father as M. Cato, and such a husband as M. Brutus. She had a soul capable of an *exalted passion*, and found a proper object to raise and give it a sanction; she did not only love but adored her husband; his worth, his truth, his every shining and heroic quality, made her gaze on him like a god, while the endearing returns of esteem and tenderness she met with, brought her joy, her pride, her every wish to centre in her beloved Brutus."

When the reader has been awakened by this rapturous preparation, he hears the whole story of Portia in the same luxuriant style, till she breathed out her last, a little before the *bloody proscription*, and "Brutus complained heavily of his friends at Rome, as not having paid due attention to his *lady* in the declining state of her health."

He is a great lover of modern terms. His senators and their wives are *gentlemen* and *ladies*. In this review of Brutus's army, who *was under the command of gallant men, not braver officers than true patriots*, he tells us, "that Sextus, the questor, was *paymaster, secretary at war, and commissary general;* and that the *sacred discipline* of the Romans required the closest connexion, like that of father and son, to

subsist between the general of an army and his questor. Cicero was *general of the cavalry*, and the next *general officer* was Flavius, *master of the artillery;* the elder Lentulus was *admiral*, and the younger *rode* in the *band of volunteers;* under these the tribunes, *with many others, too tedious to name.*" Lentulus, however, was but a subordinate officer; for we are informed afterwards, that the Romans had made Sextus Pompeius *lord high admiral in all the seas of their dominions.*

Among other affectations of this writer, is a furious and unnecessary zeal for liberty; or rather, for one form of government as preferable to another. This, indeed, might be suffered, because political institution is a subject in which men have always differed, and, if they continue to obey their lawful governours, and attempt not to make innovations, for the sake of their favourite schemes, they may differ for ever, without any just reproach from one another. But who can bear the hardy champion, who ventures nothing? who, in full security, undertakes the defence of the assassination of Cæsar, and declares his resolution *to speak plain?* Yet let not just sentiments be overlooked: he has justly observed, that the greater part of mankind will be naturally prejudiced against Brutus, for all feel the benefits of private friendship; but few can discern the advantages of a well-constituted government[e].

We know not whether some apology may not be

[e] The first part of this review closed here. What follows did not appear until seven months after. To which delay the writer alludes with provoking severity.

necessary for the distance between the first account of this book and its continuation. The truth is, that this work, not being forced upon our attention by much publick applause or censure, was sometimes neglected, and sometimes forgotten; nor would it, perhaps, have been now resumed, but that we might avoid to disappoint our readers by an abrupt desertion of any subject.

It is not our design to criticise the facts of this history, but the style; not the veracity, but the address of the writer; for, an account of the ancient Romans, as it cannot nearly interest any present reader, and must be drawn from writings that have been long known, can owe its value only to the language in which it is delivered, and the reflections with which it is accompanied. Dr. Blackwell, however, seems to have heated his imagination, so as to be much affected with every event, and to believe that he can affect others. Enthusiasm is, indeed, sufficiently contagious; but I never found any of his readers much enamoured of the *glorious Pompey, the patriot approv'd*, or much incensed against the *lawless Cæsar*, whom this author, probably, stabs every day and night in his sleeping or waking dreams.

He is come too late into the world with his fury for freedom, with his Brutus and Cassius. We have all, on this side of the Tweed, long since settled our opinions: his zeal for Roman liberty and declamations against the violators of the republican constitution, only stand now in the reader's way, who wishes to proceed in the narrative without the in-

terruption of epithets and exclamations. It is not easy to forbear laughter at a man so bold in fighting shadows, so busy in a dispute two thousand years past, and so zealous for the honour of a people, who, while they were poor, robbed mankind, and, as soon as they became rich, robbed one another. Of these robberies our author seems to have no very quick sense, except when they are committed by Cæsar's party, for every act is sanctified by the name of a patriot.

If this author's skill in ancient literature were less generally acknowledged, one might sometimes suspect, that he had too frequently consulted the French writers. He tells us, that Archelaus, the Rhodian, made a speech to Cassius, and, *in so saying*, dropt some tears; and that Cassius, after the reduction of Rhodes, was *covered with glory*.—Deiotarus was a keen and happy spirit—the ingrate Castor kept his court.

His great delight is to show his universal acquaintance with terms of art, with words that every other polite writer has avoided and despised. When Pompey conquered the pirates, he destroyed fifteen hundred ships of the line.—The Xanthian parapets were tore down.—Brutus, suspecting that his troops were plundering, commanded the trumpets to sound to their colours.—Most people understood the act of attainder passed by the senate.—The Numidian troopers were unlikely in their appearance.—The Numidians beat up one quarter after another.—Salvidienus resolved to pass his men over, in boats of leather, and he gave orders for equipping a suffi-

cient number of that sort of small craft.—Pompey had light, agile frigates, and fought in a strait, where the current and caverns occasion swirls and a roll.—A sharp out-look was kept by the admiral.—It is a run of about fifty Roman miles.—Brutus broke Lipella in the sight of the army.—Mark Antony garbled the senate. He was a brave man, well qualified for a commodore.

In his choice of phrases he frequently uses words with great solemnity, which every other mouth and pen has appropriated to jocularity and levity! The Rhodians gave up the contest, and, in poor plight, fled back to Rhodes.—Boys and girls were easily kidnapped.—Deiotarus was a mighty believer of augury.—Deiotarus destroyed his ungracious progeny.—The regularity of the Romans was their mortal aversion.—They desired the consuls to curb such heinous doings.—He had such a shrewd invention, that no side of a question came amiss to him.—Brutus found his mistress a coquettish creature.

He sometimes, with most unlucky dexterity, mixes the grand and the burlesque together; *the violation of faith, sir*, says Cassius, *lies at the door of the Rhodians by reiterated acts of perfidy.*—The iron grate fell down, crushed those under it to death, and catched the rest as in a trap.—When the Xanthians heard the military shout, and saw the flame mount, they concluded there would be no mercy. It was now about sunset, and they had been at hot work since noon.

He has, often, words, or phrases, with which our language has hitherto had no knowledge.—One was

a heart-friend to the republic—A deed was expeded.—The Numidians begun to reel, and were in hazard of falling into confusion.—The tutor embraced his pupil close in his arms.—Four hundred women were taxed, who have, no doubt, been the wives of the best Roman citizens.—Men not born to action are inconsequential in government.—Collectitious troops.—The foot, by their violent attack, began the fatal break in the Pharsaliac field.—He and his brother, with a politic, common to other countries, had taken opposite sides.

His epithets are of the gaudy or hyperbolical kind. The glorious news—eager hopes and dismal fears—bleeding Rome—divine laws and hallowed customs—merciless war—intense anxiety.

Sometimes the reader is suddenly ravished with a sonorous sentence, of which, when the noise is past, the meaning does not long remain. When Brutus set his legions to fill a moat, instead of heavy dragging and slow toil, they set about it with huzzas and racing, as if they had been striving at the Olympic games. They hurled impetuous down the huge trees and stones, and, with shouts, forced them into the water; so that the work, expected to continue half the campaign, was, with rapid toil, completed in a few days. Brutus's soldiers fell to the gate with resistless fury; it gave way, at last, with hideous crash.—This great and good man, doing his duty to his country, received a mortal wound, and glorious fell in the cause of Rome; may his memory be ever dear to all lovers of liberty, learning, and humanity! This promise ought ever to embalm his

memory.—The queen of nations was torn by no foreign invader.—Rome fell a sacrifice to her own sons, and was ravaged by her unnatural offspring: all the great men of the state, all the good, all the holy, were openly murdered by the wickedest and worst.—Little islands cover the harbour of Brindisi, and form the narrow outlet from the numerous creeks that compose its capacious port.—At the appearance of Brutus and Cassius, a shout of joy rent the heavens from the surrounding multitudes.

Such are the flowers which may be gathered, by every hand, in every part of this garden of eloquence. But having thus freely mentioned our author's faults, it remains that we acknowledge his merit; and confess, that this book is the work of a man of letters, that it is full of events displayed with accuracy, and related with vivacity; and though it is sufficiently defective to crush the vanity of its author, it is sufficiently entertaining to invite readers.

Review of Four Letters From Sir Isaac Newton to Dr. Bentley

containing some arguments in proof of a deity[f]

It will certainly be required, that notice should be taken of a book, however small, written on such a subject, by such an author. Yet I know not whether these letters will be very satisfactory; for they are answers to inquiries not published; and, therefore, though they contain many positions of great importance, are, in some parts, imperfect and obscure, by their reference to Dr. Bentley's letters.

[f] Literary Magazine, vol. i. p. 89. 1756

Sir Isaac declares, that what he has done is due to nothing but industry and patient thought; and, indeed, long consideration is so necessary in such abstruse inquiries, that it is always dangerous to publish the productions of great men, which are not known to have been designed for the press, and of which it is uncertain, whether much patience and thought have been bestowed upon them. The principal question of these letters gives occasion to observe, how even the mind of Newton gains ground, gradually, upon darkness.

"As to your first query," says he, "it seems to me, that if the matter of our sun and planets, and all the matter of the universe, were evenly scattered, throughout all the heavens, and every particle had an innate gravity towards all the rest, and the whole space, throughout which this matter was scattered, was but finite, the matter on the outside of this space would, by its gravity, tend towards all the matter on the inside, and, by consequence, fall down into the middle of the whole space, and there compose one great spherical mass. But if the matter was evenly disposed throughout an infinite space, it could never convene into one mass, but some of it would convene into one mass, and some into another, so as to make an infinite number of great masses, scattered, at great distances, from one to another, throughout all that infinite space. And thus might the sun and fixed stars be formed, supposing the matter were of a lucid nature. But how the matter should divide itself into two sorts, and that part of it, which is fit to compose a shining body, should

fall down into one mass, and make a sun, and the rest, which is fit to compose an opaque body, should coalesce, not into one great body, like the shining matter, but into many little ones; or, if the sun, at first, were an opaque body, like the planets, or the planets lucid bodies, like the sun, how he alone should be changed into a shining body, whilst all they continue opaque, or all they be changed into opaque ones, whilst he remains unchanged, I do not think more explicable by mere natural causes, but am forced to ascribe it to the counsel and contrivance of a voluntary agent."

The hypothesis of matter evenly disposed through infinite space, seems to labour with such difficulties, as makes it almost a contradictory supposition, or a supposition destructive of itself.

"Matter evenly disposed through infinite space," is either created or eternal; if it was created, it infers a creator; if it was eternal, it had been from eternity "evenly spread through infinite space;" or it had been once coalesced in masses, and, afterwards, been diffused. Whatever state was first must have been from eternity, and what had been from eternity could not be changed, but by a cause beginning to act, as it had never acted before, that is, by the voluntary act of some external power. If matter, infinitely and evenly diffused, was a moment without coalition, it could never coalesce at all by its own power. If matter originally tended to coalesce, it could never be evenly diffused through infinite space. Matter being supposed eternal, there never

was a time, when it could be diffused before its conglobation, or conglobated before its diffusion.

This sir Isaac seems, by degrees, to have understood; for he says, in his second letter: "The reason why matter, evenly scattered through a finite space, would convene in the midst, you conceive the same with me; but, that there should be a central particle, so accurately placed in the middle, as to be always equally attracted on all sides, and, thereby, continue without motion, seems to me a supposition fully as hard as to make the sharpest needle stand upright upon its point on a looking-glass. For, if the very mathematical centre of the central particle be not accurately in the very mathematical centre of the attractive power of the whole mass, the particle will not be attracted equally on all sides. And much harder is it to suppose all the particles, in an infinite space, should be so accurately poised, one among another, as to stand still in a perfect equilibrium. For I reckon this as hard as to make not one needle only, but an infinite number of them, (so many as there are particles in an infinite space,) stand accurately poised upon their points. Yet I grant it possible, at least, by a divine power; and, if they were once to be placed, I agree with you, that they would continue in that posture without motion, for ever, unless put into new motion by the same power. When, therefore, I said, that matter evenly spread through all space, would convene, by its gravity, into one or more great masses, I understand it of matter not resting in an accurate poise."

Let not it be thought irreverence to this great

name, if I observe, that by "matter evenly spread" through infinite space, he now finds it necessary to mean "matter not evenly spread." Matter not evenly spread will, indeed, convene, but it will convene as soon as it exists. And, in my opinion, this puzzling question about matter, is only, how that could be that never could have been, or what a man thinks on when he thinks on nothing.

Turn matter on all sides, make it eternal, or of late production, finite or infinite, there can be no regular system produced, but by a voluntary and meaning agent. This the great Newton always asserted, and this he asserts in the third letter; but proves, in another manner, in a manner, perhaps, more happy and conclusive.

"The hypothesis of deriving the frame of the world, by mechanical principles, from matter evenly spread through the heavens, being inconsistent with my system, I had considered it very little, before your letter put me upon it, and, therefore, trouble you with a line or two more about it, if this comes not too late for your use.

"In my former, I represented, that the diurnal rotations of the planets could not be derived from gravity, but required a divine arm to impress them. And though gravity might give the planets a motion of descent towards the sun, either directly, or with some little obliquity, yet the transverse motions, by which they revolve in their several orbs, required the divine arm to impress them, according to the tangents of their orbs. I would now add, that the hypothesis of matter's being, at first, evenly spread

through the heavens, is, in my opinion, inconsistent with the hypothesis of innate gravity, without a supernatural power to reconcile them, and, therefore, it infers a deity. For, if there be innate gravity, it is impossible now for the matter of the earth, and all the planets and stars, to fly up from them, and become evenly spread throughout all the heavens, without a supernatural power; and, certainly, that which can never be hereafter, without a supernatural power, could never be heretofore, without the same power."

Review of a Journal of Eight Days' Journey

From Portsmouth to Kingston upon Thames, through Southampton, Wiltshire, &c. with miscellaneous thoughts, moral and religious; in sixty-four letters: addressed to two ladies of the partie. To which is added, an Essay on Tea, considered as pernicious to health, obstructing industry, and impoverishing the nation; with an account of its growth, and great consumption in these kingdoms; with several political reflections; and thoughts on publick love: in thirty-two letters to two ladies. By Mr. H * * * * *.

[From the Literary Magazine, vol. ii. No. xiii. 1757.]

Our readers may, perhaps, remember, that we gave them a short account of this book, with a letter, extracted from it, in November, 1756. The author then sent us an injunction, to forbear his work, till a second edition should appear: this prohibition was rather too magisterial; for an author is no longer the sole master of a book, which he has given to the publick; yet he has been punctually obeyed; we had no desire to offend him; and, if his character may be estimated by his book, he is a man whose failings may well be pardoned for his virtues.

The second edition is now sent into the world,

corrected and enlarged, and yielded up, by the author, to the attacks of criticism. But he shall find in us, no malignity of censure. We wish, indeed, that, among other corrections, he had submitted his pages to the inspection of a grammarian, that the elegancies of one line might not have been disgraced by the improprieties of another; but, with us, to mean well is a degree of merit, which overbalances much greater errours than impurity of style.

We have already given, in our collections, one of the letters, in which Mr. Hanway endeavours to show, that the consumption of tea is injurious to the interest of our country. We shall now endeavour to follow him, regularly, through all his observations on this modern luxury; but, it can scarcely be candid not to make a previous declaration, that he is to expect little justice from the author of this extract, a hardened and shameless tea-drinker, who has, for twenty years, diluted his meals with only the infusion of this fascinating plant; whose kettle has scarcely time to cool; who with tea amuses the evening, with tea solaces the midnight, and, with tea, welcomes the morning.

He begins by refuting a popular notion, that bohea and green tea are leaves of the same shrub, gathered at different times of the year. He is of opinion, that they are produced by different shrubs. The leaves of tea are gathered in dry weather; then dried and curled over the fire, in copper pans. The Chinese use little green tea, imagining, that it hinders digestion, and excites fevers. How it should have either effect, is not easily discovered; and, if

we consider the innumerable prejudices, which prevail concerning our own plants, we shall very little regard these opinions of the Chinese vulgar, which experience does not confirm.

When the Chinese drink tea, they infuse it slightly, and extract only the more volatile parts; but though this seems to require great quantities at a time, yet the author believes, perhaps, only because he has an inclination to believe it, that the English and Dutch use more than all the inhabitants of that extensive empire. The Chinese drink it, sometimes, with acids, seldom with sugar; and this practice our author, who has no intention to find anything right at home, recommends to his countrymen.

The history of the rise and progress of tea-drinking is truly curious. Tea was first imported, from Holland, by the earls of Arlington and Ossory, in 1666; from their ladies the women of quality learned its use. Its price was then three pounds a pound, and continued the same to 1707. In 1715, we began to use green tea, and the practice of drinking it descended to the lower class of the people. In 1720, the French began to send it hither by a clandestine commerce. From 1717 to 1726, we imported, annually, seven hundred thousand pounds. From 1732 to 1742, a million and two hundred thousand pounds were every year brought to London; in some years afterwards three millions; and in 1755, near four millions of pounds, or two thousand tons, in which we are not to reckon that which is surreptitiously introduced, which, perhaps,

is nearly as much. Such quantities are, indeed, sufficient to alarm us; it is, at least, worth inquiry, to know what are the qualities of such a plant, and what the consequences of such a trade.

He then proceeds to enumerate the mischiefs of tea, and seems willing to charge upon it every mischief that he can find. He begins, however, by questioning the virtues ascribed to it, and denies that the crews of the Chinese ships are preserved, in their voyage homewards, from the scurvy by tea. About this report I have made some inquiry, and though I cannot find that these crews are wholly exempt from scorbutick maladies, they seem to suffer them less than other mariners, in any course of equal length. This I ascribe to the tea, not as possessing any medicinal qualities, but as tempting them to drink more water, to dilute their salt food more copiously, and, perhaps, to forbear punch, or other strong liquors.

He then proceeds, in the pathetick strain, to tell the ladies how, by drinking tea, they injure their health, and, what is yet more dear, their beauty.

"To what can we ascribe the numerous complaints which prevail? How many sweet creatures of your sex languish with a weak digestion, low spirits, lassitudes, melancholy, and twenty disorders, which, in spite of the faculty, have yet no names, except the general one of nervous complaints? Let them change their diet, and, among other articles, leave off drinking tea, it is more than probable, the greatest part of them will be restored to health."

"Hot water is also very hurtful to the teeth. The

Chinese do not drink their tea so hot as we do, and yet they have bad teeth. This cannot be ascribed entirely to sugar, for they use very little, as already observed; but we all know, that hot or cold things, which pain the teeth, destroy them also. If we drank less tea, and used gentle acids for the gums and teeth, particularly sour oranges, though we had a less number of French dentists, I fancy this essential part of beauty would be much better preserved.

"The women in the United Provinces, who sip tea from morning till night, are also as remarkable for bad teeth. They also look pallid, and many are troubled with certain feminine disorders, arising from a relaxed habit. The Portuguese ladies, on the other hand, entertain with sweetmeats, and yet they have very good teeth; but their food, in general, is more of a farinaceous and vegetable kind than ours. They also drink cold water, instead of sipping hot, and never taste any fermented liquors; for these reasons, the use of sugar does not seem to be at all pernicious to them."

"Men seem to have lost their stature and comeliness, and women their beauty. I am not young, but, methinks, there is not quite so much beauty in this land as there was. Your very chambermaids have lost their bloom, I suppose, by sipping tea. Even the agitations of the passions at cards are not so great enemies to female charms. What Shakespeare ascribes to the concealment of love, is, in this age, more frequently occasioned by the use of tea."

To raise the fright still higher, he quotes an ac-

count of a pig's tail, scalded with tea, on which, however, he does not much insist.

Of these dreadful effects, some are, perhaps, imaginary, and some may have another cause. That there is less beauty in the present race of females, than in those who entered the world with us, all of us are inclined to think, on whom beauty has ceased to smile; but our fathers and grandfathers made the same complaint before us; and our posterity will still find beauties irresistibly powerful.

That the diseases, commonly called nervous, tremours, fits, habitual depression, and all the maladies which proceed from laxity and debility, are more frequent than in any former time, is, I believe, true, however deplorable. But this new race of evils will not be expelled by the prohibition of tea. This general languor is the effect of general luxury, of general idleness. If it be most to be found among tea-drinkers, the reason is, that tea is one of the stated amusements of the idle and luxurious. The whole mode of life is changed; every kind of voluntary labour, every exercise that strengthened the nerves, and hardened the muscles, is fallen into disuse. The inhabitants are crowded together in populous cities, so that no occasion of life requires much motion; every one is near to all that he wants; and the rich and delicate seldom pass from one street to another, but in carriages of pleasure. Yet we eat and drink, or strive to eat and drink, like the hunters and huntresses, the farmers and the housewives, of the former generation; and they that pass ten hours in bed, and eight at cards, and the greater

part of the other six at the table, are taught to impute to tea all the diseases which a life, unnatural in all its parts, may chance to bring upon them.

Tea, among the greater part of those who use it most, is drunk in no great quantity. As it neither exhilarates the heart, nor stimulates the palate, it is commonly an entertainment merely nominal, a pretence for assembling to prattle, for interrupting business, or diversifying idleness. They, who drink one cup, and, who drink twenty, are equally punctual in preparing or partaking it; and, indeed, there are few but discover, by their indifference about it, that they are brought together not by the tea, but the tea-table. Three cups make the common quantity, so slightly impregnated, that, perhaps, they might be tinged with the Athenian cicuta, and produce less effects than these letters charge upon tea.

Our author proceeds to show yet other bad qualities of this hated leaf.

"Green tea, when made strong, even by infusion, is an emetick; nay, I am told, it is used as such in China; a decoction of it certainly performs this operation; yet, by long use, it is drunk by many without such an effect. The infusion also, when it is made strong, and stands long to draw the grosser particles, will convulse the bowels: even in the manner commonly used, it has this effect on some constitutions, as I have already remarked to you from my own experience.

"You see I confess my weakness without reserve; but those who are very fond of tea, if their digestion is weak, and they find themselves disordered, they

generally ascribe it to any cause, except the true one. I am aware that the effect, just mentioned, is imputed to the hot water; let it be so, and my argument is still good: but who pretends to say, it is not partly owing to particular kinds of tea? perhaps, such as partake of copperas, which, there is cause to apprehend, is sometimes the case: if we judge from the manner in which it is said to be cured, together with its ordinary effects, there is some foundation for this opinion. Put a drop of strong tea, either green or bohea, but chiefly the former, on the blade of a knife, though it is not corrosive, in the same manner as vitriol, yet there appears to be a corrosive quality in it, very different from that of fruit, which stains the knife."

He afterwards quotes Paulli, to prove, that tea is a "desiccative, and ought not to be used after the fortieth year." I have, then, long exceeded the limits of permission, but I comfort myself, that all the enemies of tea cannot be in the right. If tea be a desiccative, according to Paulli, it cannot weaken the fibres, as our author imagines; if it be emetick, it must constringe the stomach, rather than relax it.

The formidable quality of tinging the knife, it has in common with acorns, the bark, and leaves of oak, and every astringent bark or leaf: the copperas, which is given to the tea, is really in the knife. Ink may be made of any ferruginous matter, and astringent vegetable, as it is generally made of galls and copperas.

From tea, the writer digresses to spirituous liquors, about which he will have no controversy with the

Literary Magazine; we shall, therefore, insert almost his whole letter, and add to it one testimony, that the mischiefs arising, on every side, from this compendious mode of drunkenness, are enormous and insupportable; equally to be found among the great and the mean; filling palaces with disquiet, and distraction, harder to be borne, as it cannot be mentioned; and overwhelming multitudes with incurable diseases, and unpitied poverty.

"Though tea and gin have spread their baneful influence over this island, and his majesty's other dominions, yet, you may be well assured, that the governors of the Foundling Hospital will exert their utmost skill and vigilance, to prevent the children, under their care, from being poisoned, or enervated by one or the other. This, however, is not the case of workhouses: it is well known, to the shame of those who are charged with the care of them, that gin has been too often permitted to enter their gates; and the debauched appetites of the people, who inhabit these houses, has been urged as a reason for it.

"Desperate diseases require desperate remedies: if laws are rigidly executed against murderers in the highway, those who provide a draught of gin, which we see is murderous, ought not to be countenanced. I am now informed, that in certain hospitals, where the number of the sick used to be about 5600 in 14 years,

From 1704 to 1718, they increased to 8189;
From 1718 to 1734, still augmented to 12,710;
And from 1734 to 1749, multiplied to 38,147.

"What a dreadful spectre does this exhibit! nor must we wonder, when satisfactory evidence was given, before the great council of the nation, that near eight millions of gallons of distilled spirits, at the standard it is commonly reduced to for drinking, was actually consumed annually in drams! the shocking difference in the numbers of the sick, and, we may presume, of the dead also, was supposed to keep pace with gin; and the most ingenious and unprejudiced physicians ascribed it to this cause. What is to be done under these melancholy circumstances? shall we still countenance the distillery, for the sake of the revenue; out of tenderness to the few, who will suffer by its being abolished; for fear of the madness of the people; or that foreigners will run it in upon us? There can be no evil so great as that we now suffer, except the making the same consumption, and paying for it to foreigners in money, which I hope never will be the case.

"As to the revenue, it certainly may be replaced by taxes upon the necessaries of life, even upon the bread we eat, or, in other words, upon the land, which is the great source of supply to the public, and to individuals. Nor can I persuade myself, but that the people may be weaned from the habit of poisoning themselves. The difficulty of smuggling a bulky liquid, joined to the severity which ought to be exercised towards smugglers, whose illegal commerce is of so infernal a nature, must, in time, produce the effect desired. Spirituous liquors being abolished, instead of having the most undisciplined and abandoned poor, we might soon boast a race of

men, temperate, religious, and industrious, even to a proverb. We should soon see the ponderous burden of the poor's rate decrease, and the beauty and strength of the land rejuvenate. Schools, workhouses, and hospitals, might then be sufficient to clear our streets of distress and misery, which never will be the case, whilst the love of poison prevails, and the means of ruin is sold in above one thousand houses in the city of London, in two thousand two hundred in Westminster, and one thousand nine hundred and thirty in Holborn and St. Giles's.

"But if other uses still demand liquid fire, I would really suppose, that it should be sold only in quart bottles, sealed up, with the king's seal, with a very high duty, and none sold without being mixed with a strong emetic.

"Many become objects of charity by their intemperance, and this excludes others, who are such by the unavoidable accidents of life, or who cannot, by any means, support themselves. Hence it appears, that the introducing new habits of life, is the most substantial charity; and that the regulation of charity-schools, hospitals, and workhouses, not the augmentation of their number, can make them answer the wise ends, for which they were instituted.

"The children of beggars should be also taken from them, and bred up to labour, as children of the public. Thus the distressed might be relieved, at a sixth part of the present expense; the idle be compelled to work or starve; and the mad be sent to Bedlam. We should not see human nature disgraced by the aged, the maimed, the sickly, and young

children, begging their bread; nor would compassion be abused by those, who have reduced it to an art to catch the unwary. Nothing is wanting but common sense and honesty in the execution of laws.

"To prevent such abuse in the streets, seems more practicable than to abolish bad habits within doors, where greater numbers perish. We see, in many familiar instances, the fatal effects of example. The careless spending of time among servants, who are charged with the care of infants, is often fatal: the nurse frequently destroys the child! the poor infant, being left neglected, expires whilst she is sipping her tea! This may appear to you as rank prejudice, or jest; but, I am assured, from the most indubitable evidence, that many very extraordinary cases of this kind have really happened, among those whose duty does not permit of such kind of habits.

"It is partly from such causes, that nurses of the children of the public often forget themselves, and become impatient when infants cry; the next step to this is using extraordinary means to quiet them. I have already mentioned the term killing nurse, as known in some workhouses: Venice treacle, poppy water, and Godfrey's cordial, have been the kind instruments of lulling the child to his everlasting rest. If these pious women could send up an ejaculation, when the child expired, all was well, and no questions asked by the superiors. An ingenious friend of mine informs me, that this has been so often the case, in some workhouses, that Venice treacle has acquired the appellation of 'the Lord have mercy upon me,' in allusion to the nurses' hackneyed ex-

pression of pretended grief, when infants expire! Farewell."

I know not upon what observation Mr. Hanway founds his confidence in the governours of the Foundling Hospital, men of whom I have not any knowledge, but whom I entreat to consider a little the minds, as well as bodies, of the children. I am inclined to believe irreligion equally pernicious with gin and tea, and, therefore, think it not unseasonable to mention, that, when, a few months ago, I wandered through the hospital, I found not a child that seemed to have heard of his creed, or the commandments. To breed up children in this manner, is to rescue them from an early grave, that they may find employment for the gibbet; from dying in innocence, that they may perish by their crimes.

Having considered the effects of tea upon the health of the drinker, which, I think, he has aggravated in the vehemence of his zeal, and which, after soliciting them by this watery luxury, year after year, I have not yet felt, he proceeds to examine, how it may be shown to affect our interest; and first calculates the national loss, by the time spent in drinking tea. I have no desire to appear captious, and shall, therefore, readily admit, that tea is a liquor not proper for the lower classes of the people, as it supplies no strength to labour, or relief to disease, but gratifies the taste, without nourishing the body. It is a barren superfluity, to which those who can hardly procure what nature requires, cannot prudently habituate themselves. Its proper use is to amuse the idle, and relax the studious, and dilute the

full meals of those who cannot use exercise, and will not use abstinence. That time is lost in this insipid entertainment cannot be denied; many trifle away, at the tea-table, those moments which would be better spent; but that any national detriment can be inferred from this waste of time, does not evidently appear, because I know not that any work remains undone, for want of hands. Our manufactures seem to be limited, not by the possibility of work, but by the possibility of sale.

His next argument is more clear. He affirms, that one hundred and fifty thousand pounds, in silver, are paid to the Chinese, annually, for three millions of pounds of tea, and, that for two millions more, brought clandestinely from the neighbouring coasts, we pay, at twenty-pence a pound, one hundred sixty-six thousand six hundred and sixty-six pounds. The author justly conceives, that this computation will waken us; for, says he: "the loss of health, the loss of time, the injury of morals, are not very sensibly felt by some, who are alarmed when you talk of the loss of money." But he excuses the East India company, as men not obliged to be political arithmeticians, or to inquire so much, what the nation loses, as how themselves may grow rich. It is certain, that they, who drink tea, have no right to complain of those that import it; but if Mr. Hanway's computation be just, the importation, and the use of it, ought, at once, to be stopped by a penal law.

The author allows one slight argument in favour of tea, which, in my opinion, might be, with far greater justice, urged both against that and many

other parts of our naval trade. "The tea-trade employs," he tells us, "six ships, and five or six hundred seamen, sent annually to China. It, likewise, brings in a revenue of three hundred and sixty thousand pounds, which, as a tax on luxury, may be considered as of great utility to the state." The utility of this tax I cannot find: a tax on luxury is no better than another tax, unless it hinders luxury, which cannot be said of the impost upon tea, while it is thus used by the great and the mean, the rich and the poor. The truth is, that, by the loss of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds, we procure the means of shifting three hundred and sixty thousand, at best, only from one hand to another; but, perhaps, sometimes into hands by which it is not very honestly employed. Of the five or six hundred seamen, sent to China, I am told, that sometimes half, commonly a third part, perish in the voyage; so that, instead of setting this navigation against the inconveniencies already alleged, we may add to them, the yearly loss of two hundred men, in the prime of life; and reckon, that the trade of China has destroyed ten thousand men, since the beginning of this century.

If tea be thus pernicious, if it impoverishes our country, if it raises temptation, and gives opportunity to illicit commerce, which I have always looked on, as one of the strongest evidences of the inefficacy of our law, the weakness of our government, and the corruption of our people, let us, at once, resolve to prohibit it for ever.

"If the question was, how to promote industry

most advantageously, in lieu of our tea-trade, supposing every branch of our commerce to be already fully supplied with men and money? If a quarter the sum, now spent in tea, were laid out, annually, in plantations, in making public gardens, in paving and widening streets, in making roads, in rendering rivers navigable, erecting palaces, building bridges, or neat and convenient houses, where are now only huts; draining lands, or rendering those, which are now barren, of some use; should we not be gainers, and provide more for health, pleasure, and long life, compared with the consequences of the tea-trade?"

Our riches would be much better employed to these purposes; but if this project does not please, let us first resolve to save our money, and we shall, afterwards, very easily find ways to spend it.

Reply to a Paper in the Gazetteer of May 26, 1757[g]

It is observed, in Le Sage's Gil Blas, that an exasperated author is not easily pacified. I have, therefore, very little hope of making my peace with the writer of the Eight Days' Journey; indeed so little, that I have long deliberated, whether I should not rather sit silently down, under his displeasure, than aggravate my misfortune, by a defence, of which my heart forebodes the ill success. Deliberation is often useless. I am afraid, that I have, at last, made the wrong choice, and that I might better have resigned my cause, without a struggle, to time and

[g] From the Literary Magazine, vol. ii. p. 253.

fortune, since I shall run the hazard of a new offence, by the necessity of asking him, why he is angry.

Distress and terrour often discover to us those faults, with which we should never have reproached ourselves in a happy state. Yet, dejected as I am, when I review the transaction between me and this writer, I cannot find, that I have been deficient in reverence. When his book was first printed, he hints, that I procured a sight of it before it was published. How the sight of it was procured, I do not now very exactly remember; but, if my curiosity was greater than my prudence, if I laid rash hands on the fatal volume, I have surely suffered, like him who burst the box, from which evil rushed into the world.

I took it, however, and inspected it, as the work of an author not higher than myself; and was confirmed in my opinion, when I found, that these letters were *not written to be printed.* I concluded, however, that, though not *written* to be *printed*, they were *printed* to be *read*, and inserted one of them in the collection of November last. Not many days after, I received a note, informing me, that I ought to have waited for a more correct edition. This injunction was obeyed. The edition appeared, and I supposed myself at liberty to tell my thoughts upon it, as upon any other book, upon a royal manifesto, or an act of parliament. But see the fate of ignorant temerity! I now find, but find too late, that, instead of a writer, whose only power is in his pen, I have irritated an important member of an im-

portant corporation; a man, who, as he tells us in his letters, puts horses to his chariot.

It was allowed to the disputant of old to yield up the controversy, with little resistance, to the master of forty legions. Those who know how weakly naked truth can defend her advocates, would forgive me, if I should pay the same respect to a governour of the foundlings. Yet, the conciousness of my own rectitude of intention incites me to ask once again, how I have offended.

There are only three subjects upon which my unlucky pen has happened to venture: tea; the author of the journal; and the foundling hospital.

Of tea, what have I said? That I have drank it twenty years, without hurt, and, therefore, believe it not to be poison; that, if it dries the fibres, it cannot soften them; that, if it constringes, it cannot relax. I have modestly doubted, whether it has diminished the strength of our men, or the beauty of our women; and whether it much hinders the progress of our woollen or iron manufactures; but I allowed it to be a barren superfluity, neither medicinal nor nutritious, that neither supplied strength nor cheerfulness, neither relieved weariness, nor exhilarated sorrow: I inserted, without charge or suspicion of falsehood, the sums exported to purchase it; and proposed a law to prohibit it for ever.

Of the author I unfortunately said, that his injunction was somewhat too magisterial. This I said, before I knew that he was a governour of the foundlings; but he seems inclined to punish this failure of respect, as the czar of Muscovy made war

upon Sweden, because he was not treated with sufficient honours, when he passed through the country in disguise. Yet, was not this irreverence without extenuation. Something was said of the merit of *meaning well*, and the journalist was declared to be a man, *whose failings might well be pardoned for his virtues*. This is the highest praise which human gratitude can confer upon human merit; praise that would have more than satisfied Titus or Augustus, but which I must own to be inadequate and penurious, when offered to the member of an important corporation.

I am asked, whether I meant to satirize the man, or criticise the writer, when I say, that "he believes, only, perhaps, because he has inclination to believe it, that the English and Dutch consume more tea than the vast empire of China." Between the writer and the man, I did not, at that time, consider the distinction. The writer I found not of more than mortal might, and I did not immediately recollect, that the man put horses to his chariot. But I did not write wholly without consideration. I knew but two causes of belief, evidence and inclination. What evidence the journalist could have of the Chinese consumption of tea, I was not able to discover. The officers of the East India company are excluded, they best know why, from the towns and the country of China; they are treated, as we treat gypsies and vagrants, and obliged to retire, every night, to their own hovel. What intelligence such travellers may bring, is of no great importance. And, though the missionaries boast of having once penetrated further, I

think, they have never calculated the tea drunk by the Chinese. There being thus no evidence for his opinion, to what could I ascribe it but inclination.

I am yet charged, more heavily, for having said, that "he has no intention to find any thing right at home." I believe every reader restrained this imputation to the subject which produced it, and supposed me to insinuate only, that he meant to spare no part of the tea-table, whether essence or circumstance. But this line he has selected, as an instance of virulence and acrimony, and confutes it by a lofty and splendid panegyrick on himself. He asserts, that he finds many things right at home, and that he loves his country almost to enthusiasm.

I had not the least doubt, that he found, in his country, many things to please him; nor did I suppose, that he desired the same inversion of every part of life, as of the use of tea. The proposal of drinking tea sour showed, indeed, such a disposition to practical paradoxes, that there was reason to fear, lest some succeeding letter should recommend the dress of the Picts, or the cookery of the Eskimaux. However, I met with no other innovations, and, therefore, was willing to hope, that he found something right at home.

But his love of his country seemed not to rise quite to enthusiasm, when, amidst his rage against tea, he made a smooth apology for the East India company, as men who might not think themselves obliged to be political arithmeticians. I hold, though no enthusiastick patriot, that every man, who lives and trades under the protection of a community, is

obliged to consider, whether he hurts or benefits those who protect him; and that the most which can be indulged to private interest, is a neutral traffick, if any such can be, by which our country is not injured, though it may not be benefited.

But he now renews his declamation against tea, notwithstanding the greatness or power of those that have interest or inclination to support it. I know not of what power or greatness he may dream. The importers only have an interest in defending it. I am sure, they are not great, and, I hope, they are not powerful. Those, whose inclination leads them to continue this practice, are too numerous; but, I believe their power is such, as the journalist may defy, without enthusiasm. The love of our country, when it rises to enthusiasm, is an ambiguous and uncertain virtue: when a man is enthusiastick, he ceases to be reasonable; and, when he once departs from reason, what will he do, but drink sour tea? As the journalist, though enthusiastically zealous for his country, has, with regard to smaller things, the placid happiness of philosophical indifference, I can give him no disturbance, by advising him to restrain, even the love of his country, within due limits, lest it should, sometimes, swell too high, fill the whole capacity of his soul, and leave less room for the love of truth.

Nothing now remains, but that I review my positions concerning the foundling hospital. What I declared last month, I declare now, once more, that I found none of the children that appeared to have heard of the catechism. It is inquired, how I wan-

dered, and how I examined. There is, doubtless, subtlety in the question; I know not well how to answer it. Happily, I did not wander alone; I attended some ladies, with another gentleman, who all heard and assisted the inquiry, with equal grief and indignation. I did not conceal my observations. Notice was given of this shameful defect soon after, at my request, to one of the highest names of the society. This, I am now told, is incredible; but, since it is true, and the past is out of human power, the most important corporation cannot make it false. But, why is it incredible? Because, in the rules of the hospital, the children are ordered to learn the rudiments of religion. Orders are easily made, but they do not execute themselves. They say their catechism, at stated times, under an able master. But this able master was, I think, not elected before last February; and my visit happened, if I mistake not, in November. The children were shy, when interrogated by a stranger. This may be true, but the same shiness I do not remember to have hindered them from answering other questions; and I wonder, why children, so much accustomed to new spectators, should be eminently shy.

My opponent, in the first paragraph, calls the inference that I made from this negligence, a hasty conclusion: to the decency of this expression I had nothing to object; but, as he grew hot in his career, his enthusiasm began to sparkle; and, in the vehemence of his postscript, he charges my assertions, and my reasons for advancing them, with folly and malice. His argumentation, being somewhat enthu-

siastical, I cannot fully comprehend, but it seems to stand thus: my insinuations are foolish or malicious, since I know not one of the governours of the hospital; for, he that knows not the governours of the hospital, must be very foolish or malicious.

He has, however, so much kindness for me, that he advises me to consult my safety, when I talk of corporations. I know not what the most important corporation can do, becoming manhood, by which my safety is endangered. My reputation is safe, for I can prove the fact; my quiet is safe, for I meant well; and for any other safety, I am not used to be very solicitous.

I am always sorry, when I see any being labouring in vain; and, in return for the journalist's attention to my safety, I will confess some compassion for his tumultuous resentment; since all his invectives fume into the air, with so little effect upon me, that I still esteem him, as one that has the *merit of meaning well;* and still believe him to be a man, *whose failings may be justly pardoned for his virtues*[h].

Writings and Genius of Pope

REVIEW[1] OF AN ESSAY

This is a very curious and entertaining miscellany of critical remarks and literary history. Though the book promises nothing but observations on the

[h] And of such a man, it is to be regretted, that Dr. Johnson was, by whatever motive, induced to speak with acrimony; but, it is probable, that he took up the subject, at first, merely to give play to his fancy. This answer, however, to Mr. Hanway's letter, is, as Mr. Boswell has remarked, the only instance, in the whole course of his life, when he condescended to oppose any thing that was written against him. C.

[1] From the Literary Magazine. 1756.

writings of Pope, yet no opportunity is neglected of introducing the character of any other writer, or the mention of any performance or event, in which learning is interested. From Pope, however, he always takes his hint, and to Pope he returns again from his digressions. The facts, which he mentions, though they are seldom anecdotes, in a rigorous sense, are often such as are very little known, and such as will delight more readers than naked criticism.

As he examines the works of this great poet, in an order nearly chronological, he necessarily begins with his pastorals, which, considered as representations of any kind of life, he very justly censures; for there is in them a mixture of Grecian and English, of ancient and modern images. Windsor is coupled with Hybla, and Thames with Pactolus. He then compares some passages, which Pope has imitated, or translated, with the imitation, or version, and gives the preference to the originals, perhaps, not always upon convincing arguments.

Theocritus makes his lover wish to be a bee, that he might creep among the leaves that form the chaplet of his mistress. Pope's enamoured swain longs to be made the captive bird that sings in his fair one's bower, that she might listen to his songs, and reward him with her kisses. The critick prefers the image of Theocritus, as more wild, more delicate, and more uncommon.

It is natural for a lover to wish, that he might be any thing that could come near to his lady. But we more naturally desire to be that which she

fondles and caresses, than that which she would avoid, at least would neglect. The superiour delicacy of Theocritus I cannot discover, nor can, indeed, find, that either in the one or the other image there is any want of delicacy. Which of the two images was less common in the time of the poet who used it, for on that consideration the merit of novelty depends, I think it is now out of any critick's power to decide.

He remarks, I am afraid, with too much justice, that there is not a single new thought in the pastorals; and, with equal reason, declares, that their chief beauty consists in their correct and musical versification, which has so influenced the English ear, as to render every moderate rhymer harmonious.

In his examination of the Messiah, he justly observes some deviations from the inspired author, which weaken the imagery, and dispirit the expression.

On Windsor Forest, he declares, I think without proof, that descriptive poetry was by no means the excellence of Pope; he draws this inference from the few images introduced in this poem, which would not equally belong to any other place. He must inquire, whether Windsor forest has, in reality, any thing peculiar.

The Stag-chase is not, he says, so full, so animated, and so circumstantiated, as Somerville's. Barely to say, that one performance is not so good as another, is to criticise with little exactness. But Pope has directed, that we should, in every work, regard the author's end. The stag-chase is the main

subject of Somerville, and might, therefore, be properly dilated into all its circumstances; in Pope, it is only incidental, and was to be despatched in a few lines.

He makes a just observation, "that the description of the external beauties of nature, is usually the first effort of a young genius, before he hath studied nature and passions. Some of Milton's most early, as well as most exquisite pieces, are his Lycidas, l'Allegro, and il Penseroso, if we may except his ode on the Nativity of Christ, which is, indeed, prior in order of time, and in which a penetrating critick might have observed the seeds of that boundless imagination, which was, one day, to produce the Paradise Lost."

Mentioning Thomson, and other descriptive poets, he remarks, that writers fail in their copies, for want of acquaintance with originals, and justly ridicules those who think they can form just ideas of valleys, mountains, and rivers, in a garret in the Strand. For this reason, I cannot regret, with this author, that Pope laid aside his design of writing American pastorals; for, as he must have painted scenes, which he never saw, and manners, which he never knew, his performance, though it might have been a pleasing amusement of fancy, would have exhibited no representation of nature or of life.

After the pastorals, the critick considers the lyrick poetry of Pope, and dwells longest on the ode on St. Cecelia's day, which he, like the rest of mankind, places next to that of Dryden, and not much below it. He remarks, after Mr. Spence, that the

first stanza is a perfect concert: the second he thinks a little flat; he justly commends the fourth, but without notice of the best line in that stanza, or in the poem:

"Transported demi-gods stood round,
And men grew heroes at the sound."

In the latter part of the ode, he objects to the stanza of triumph:

"Thus song could prevail," &c.

as written in a measure ridiculous and burlesque, and justifies his answer, by observing, that Addison uses the same numbers in the scene of Rosamond, between Grideline and sir Trusty:

"How unhappy is he," &c.

That the measure is the same in both passages, must be confessed, and both poets, perhaps, chose their numbers properly; for they both meant to express a kind of airy hilarity. The two passions of merriment and exultation are, undoubtedly, different; they are as different as a gambol and a triumph, but each is a species of joy; and poetical measures have not, in any language, been so far refined, as to provide for the subdivisions of passion. They can only be adapted to general purposes; but the particular and minuter propriety must be sought only in the sentiment and language. Thus the numbers are the same in Colin's Complaint, and in the ballad of Darby and Joan, though, in one, sadness is represented, and, in the other, tranquillity; so the measure is the same of Pope's Unfortunate Lady, and the Praise of Voiture.

He observes, very justly, that the odes, both of Dryden and Pope, conclude, unsuitably and unnaturally, with epigram.

He then spends a page upon Mr. Handel's musick to Dryden's ode, and speaks of him with that regard which he has generally obtained among the lovers of sound. He finds something amiss in the air "With ravished ears," but has overlooked, or forgotten, the grossest fault in that composition, which is that in this line:

"Revenge, revenge, Timotheus cries."

He has laid much stress upon the two latter words, which are merely words of connexion, and ought, in musick, to be considered as parenthetical.

From this ode is struck out a digression on the nature of odes, and the comparative excellence of the ancients and moderns. He mentions the chorus which Pope wrote for the duke of Buckingham; and thence takes occasion to treat of the chorus of the ancients. He then comes to another ode, of "The dying Christian to his Soul;" in which, finding an apparent imitation of Flatman, he falls into a pleasing and learned speculation, on the resembling passages to be found in different poets.

He mentions, with great regard, Pope's ode on Solitude, written when he was but twelve years old, but omits to mention the poem on Silence, composed, I think, as early, with much greater elegance of diction, musick of numbers, extent of observation, and force of thought. If he had happened to think on Baillet's chapter of Enfans célèbres, he

might have made, on this occasion, a very entertaining dissertation on early excellence.

He comes next to the Essay on Criticism, the stupendous performance of a youth, not yet twenty years old; and, after having detailed the felicities of condition, to which he imagines Pope to have owed his wonderful prematurity of mind, he tells us, that he is well informed this essay was first written in prose. There is nothing improbable in the report, nothing, indeed, but what is more likely than the contrary; yet I[J] cannot forbear to hint to this writer, and all others, the danger and weakness of trusting too readily to information. Nothing but experience could evince the frequency of false information, or enable any man to conceive, that so many groundless reports should be propagated, as every man of eminence may hear of himself. Some men relate what they think, as what they know; some men, of confused memories and habitual inaccuracy, ascribe to one man, what belongs to another; and some talk on, without thought or care. A few men are sufficient to broach falsehoods, which are afterwards innocently diffused by successive relaters.

He proceeds on, examining passage after passage of this essay; but we must pass over all these criticisms, to which we have not something to add or to object, or where this author does not differ from the general voice of mankind. We cannot agree

In all the papers and criticisms Dr. Johnson wrote for the Literary Magazine, he frequently departs from the customary *we* of anonymous writers. This, with his inimitable style, soon pointed him out, as the principal person concerned in that publication.

with him in his censure of the comparison of a student advancing in science, with a traveller passing the Alps, which is, perhaps, the best simile in our language; that, in which the most exact resemblance is traced between things, in appearance, utterly unrelated to each other. That the last line conveys no new *idea*, is not true; it makes particular, what was before general. Whether the description, which he adds from another author, be, as he says, more full and striking than that of Pope, is not to be inquired. Pope's description is relative, and can admit of no greater length than is usually allowed to a simile, nor any other particulars than such as form the correspondence.

Unvaried rhymes, says this writer, highly disgust readers of a good ear. It is, surely, not the ear, but the mind that is offended. The fault, arising from the use of common rhymes, is, that by reading the past line, the second may be guessed, and half the composition loses the grace of novelty.

On occasion of the mention of an alexandrine, the critick observes, that "the alexandrine may be thought a modern measure, but that *Robert of Gloucester's Wife* is an alexandrine, with the addition of two syllables; and that Sternhold and Hopkins translated the Psalms in the same measure of fourteen syllables, though they are printed otherwise."

This seems not to be accurately conceived or expressed: an alexandrine, with the addition of two syllables, is no more an alexandrine, than with the detraction of two syllables. Sternhold and Hopkins

did, generally, write in the alternate measure of eight and six syllables; but Hopkins commonly rhymed the first and third; Sternhold, only the second and fourth: so that Sternhold may be considered, as writing couplets of long lines; but Hopkins wrote regular stanzas. From the practice of printing the long lines of fourteen syllables in two short lines, arose the license of some of our poets, who, though professing to write in stanzas, neglect the rhymes of the first and third lines.

Pope has mentioned Petronius, among the great names of criticism, as the remarker justly observes, without any critical merit. It is to be suspected, that Pope had never read his book, and mentioned him on the credit of two or three sentences which he had often seen quoted, imagining, that where there was so much, there must necessarily be more. Young men, in haste to be renowned, too frequently talk of books which they have scarcely seen.

The revival of learning, mentioned in this poem, affords an opportunity of mentioning the chief periods of literary history, of which this writer reckons five: that of Alexander, of Ptolemy Philadelphus, of Augustus, of Leo the tenth, of queen Anne.

These observations are concluded with a remark, which deserves great attention: "In no polished nation, after criticism has been much studied, and the rules of writing established, has any very extraordinary book ever appeared."

The Rape of the Lock was always regarded, by Pope, as the highest production of his genius. On

occasion of this work, the history of the comick-heroick is given; and we are told, that it descended from Fassoni to Boileau, from Boileau to Garth, and from Garth to Pope. Garth is mentioned, perhaps, with too much honour; but all are confessed to be inferiour to Pope. There is, in his remarks on this work, no discovery of any latent beauty, nor any thing subtle or striking; he is, indeed, commonly right, but has discussed no difficult question.

The next pieces to be considered are, the Verses to the Memory of an unfortunate Lady, the Prologue to Cato, and Epilogue to Jane Shore. The first piece he commends. On occasion of the second, he digresses, according to his custom, into a learned dissertation on tragedies, and compares the English and French with the Greek stage. He justly censures Cato, for want of action and of characters; but scarcely does justice to the sublimity of some speeches, and the philosophical exactness in the sentiments. "The simile of mount Atlas, and that of the Numidian traveller, smothered in the sands, are, indeed, in character," says the critick, "but sufficiently obvious." The simile of the mountain is, indeed, common; but that of the traveller, I do not remember. That it is obvious is easy to say, and easy to deny. Many things are obvious, when they are taught.

He proceeds to criticise the other works of Addison, till the epilogue calls his attention to Rowe, whose character he discusses in the same manner, with sufficient freedom and sufficient candour.

The translation of the epistle of Sappho to Phaon

is next considered; but Sappho and Ovid are more the subjects of this disquisition, than Pope. We shall, therefore, pass over it to a piece of more importance, the epistle of Eloisa to Abelard, which may justly be regarded, as one of the works on which the reputation of Pope will stand in future times.

The critick pursues Eloisa through all the changes of passion, produces the passages of her letters, to which any allusion is made, and intersperses many agreeable particulars and incidental relations. There is not much profundity of criticism, because the beauties are sentiments of nature, which the learned and the ignorant feel alike. It is justly remarked by him, that the wish of Eloisa, for the happy passage of Abelard into the other world, is formed according to the ideas of mystick devotion.

These are the pieces examined in this volume: whether the remaining part of the work will be one volume, or more, perhaps the writer himself cannot yet inform us[k]. This piece is, however, a complete work, so far as it goes; and the writer is of opinion, that he has despatched the chief part of his task; for he ventures to remark, that the reputation of Pope, as a poet, among posterity, will be principally founded on his Windsor Forest, Rape of the Lock, and Eloisa to Abelard; while the facts and characters, alluded to in his late writings, will be forgotten and unknown, and their poignancy and propriety

[k] The second volume of Dr. Warton's Essay was not published until the year 1782.

little relished; for wit and satire are transitory and perishable, but nature and passion are eternal.

He has interspersed some passages of Pope's life, with which most readers will be pleased. When Pope was yet a child, his father, who had been a merchant in London, retired to Binfield. He was taught to read by an aunt; and learned to write, without a master, by copying printed books. His father used to order him to make English verses, and would oblige him to correct and retouch them over and over, and, at last, could say, "These are good rhymes."

At eight years of age, he was committed to one Taverner, a priest, who taught him the rudiments of the Latin and Greek. At this time, he met with Ogleby's Homer, which seized his attention; he fell next upon Sandys's Ovid, and remembered these two translations, with pleasure, to the end of his life.

About ten, being at school, near Hyde-park corner, he was taken to the playhouse, and was so struck with the splendour of the drama, that he formed a kind of play out of Ogleby's Homer, intermixed with verses of his own. He persuaded the head boys to act this piece, and Ajax was performed by his master's gardener. They were habited according to the pictures in Ogleby. At twelve, he retired, with his father, to Windsor forest, and formed himself by study in the best English poets.

In this extract, it was thought convenient to dwell chiefly upon such observations, as relate immediately to Pope, without deviating, with the author, into incidental inquiries. We intend to kindle,

not to extinguish, curiosity, by this slight sketch of a work, abounding with curious quotations and pleasing disquisitions. He must be much acquainted with literary history, both of remote and late times, who does not find, in this essay, many things which he did not know before; and, if there be any too learned to be instructed in facts or opinions, he may yet properly read this book, as a just specimen of literary moderation.

Nature and Origin of Evil[1]

REVIEW OF A FREE ENQUIRY

This is a treatise, consisting of six letters, upon a very difficult and important question, which, I am afraid, this author's endeavours will not free from the perplexity which has entangled the speculatists of all ages, and which must always continue while *we see* but *in part*. He calls it a *Free Enquiry*, and, indeed, his *freedom* is, I think, greater than his modesty. Though he is far from the contemptible arrogance, or the impious licentiousness of Bolingbroke, yet he decides, too easily, upon questions out

[1] This Enquiry, published in 1757, was the production of Soame Jenyns, esq. who never forgave the author of the review. It is painful to relate, that, after he had suppressed his resentment during Dr. Johnson's life, he gave it vent, in a petulant and illiberal mock-epitaph, which would not have deserved notice, had it not been admitted into the edition of his works, published by Mr. Cole. When this epitaph first appeared in the newspapers, Mr. Boswell answered it by another upon Mr. Jenyns, equal, at least, in illiberality.

This review is justly reckoned one of the finest specimens of criticism in our language, and was read with such eagerness, when published in the Literary Magazine, that the author was induced to reprint it in a small volume by itself; a circumstance which appears to have escaped Mr. Boswell's research.

of the reach of human determination, with too little consideration of mortal weakness, and with too much vivacity for the necessary caution.

In the first letter, on evil in general, he observes, that, "it is the solution of this important question, whence came *evil?* alone, that can ascertain the moral characteristic of God, without which there is an end of all distinction between good and evil." Yet he begins this inquiry by this declaration: "That there is a supreme being, infinitely powerful, wise, and benevolent, the great creator and preserver of all things, is a truth so clearly demonstrated, that it shall be here taken for granted." What is this, but to say, that we have already reason to grant the existence of those attributes of God, which the present inquiry is designed to prove? The present inquiry is, then, surely made to no purpose. The attributes, to the demonstration of which the solution of this great question is necessary, have been demonstrated, without any solution, or by means of the solution of some former writer.

He rejects the Manichean system, but imputes to it an absurdity, from which, amidst all its absurdities, it seems to be free, and adopts the system of Mr. Pope. "That pain is no evil, if asserted with regard to the individuals who suffer it, is downright nonsense; but if considered as it affects the universal system, is an undoubted truth, and means only, that there is no more pain in it, than what is necessary to the production of happiness. How many soever of these evils, then, force themselves into the creation, so long as the good preponderates, it is a work

well worthy of infinite wisdom and benevolence; and, notwithstanding the imperfections of its parts, the whole is, most undoubtedly, perfect." And, in the former part of the letter, he gives the principle of his system in these words: "Omnipotence cannot work contradictions; it can only effect all possible things. But so little are we acquainted with the whole system of nature, that we know not what are possible, and what are not; but if we may judge from that constant mixture of pain with pleasure, and inconveniency with advantage, which we must observe in every thing around us, we have reason to conclude, that, to endue created beings with perfection, that is, to produce good, exclusive of evil, is one of those impossibilities, which even infinite power cannot accomplish."

This is elegant and acute, but will by no means calm discontent, or silence curiosity; for, whether evil can be wholly separated from good or not, it is plain, that they may be mixed, in various degrees, and, as far as human eyes can judge, the degree of evil might have been less, without any impediment to good.

The second letter, on the evils of imperfection, is little more than a paraphrase of Pope's epistles, or yet less than a paraphrase, a mere translation of poetry into prose. This is, surely, to attack difficulty with very disproportionate abilities, to cut the Gordian knot with very blunt instruments. When we are told of the insufficiency of former solutions, why is one of the latest, which no man can have forgotten, given us again? I am told, that this pam-

phlet is not the effort of hunger; what can it be, then, but the product of vanity ? and yet, how can vanity be gratified by plagiarism or transcription ? When this speculatist finds himself prompted to another performance, let him consider, whether he is about to disburden his mind, or employ his fingers; and, if I might venture to offer him a subject, I should wish, that he would solve this question: Why he, that has nothing to write, should desire to be a writer ?

Yet is not this letter without some sentiments, which, though not new, are of great importance, and may be read, with pleasure, in the thousandth repetition.

"Whatever we enjoy, is purely a free gift from our creator; but, that we enjoy no more, can never, sure, be deemed an injury, or a just reason to question his infinite benevolence. All our happiness is owing to his goodness; but, that it is no greater, is owing only to ourselves; that is, to our not having any inherent right to any happiness, or even to any existence at all. This is no more to be imputed to God, than the wants of a beggar to the person who has relieved him: that he had something, was owing to his benefactor; but that he had no more, only to his own original poverty."

Thus far he speaks what every man must approve, and what every wise man has said before him. He then gives us the system of subordination, not invented, for it was known, I think, to the Arabian metaphysicians, but adopted by Pope, and, from him, borrowed by the diligent researches of this great investigator.

"No system can possibly be formed, even in imagination, without a subordination of parts. Every animal body must have different members, subservient to each other; every picture must be composed of various colours, and of light and shade; all harmony must be formed of trebles, tenours, and bases; every beautiful and useful edifice must consist of higher and lower, more and less magnificent apartments. This is in the very essence of all created things, and, therefore, cannot be prevented, by any means whatever, unless by not creating them at all."

These instances are used, instead of Pope's oak and weeds, or Jupiter and his satellites; but neither Pope, nor this writer, have much contributed to solve the difficulty. Perfection, or imperfection, of unconscious beings has no meaning, as referred to themselves; the base and the treble are equally perfect; the mean and magnificent apartments feel no pleasure or pain from the comparison. Pope might ask the weed, why it was less than the oak? but the weed would never ask the question for itself. The base and treble differ only to the hearer, meanness and magnificence only to the inhabitant. There is no evil but must inhere in a conscious being, or be referred to it; that is, evil must be felt, before it is evil. Yet, even on this subject, many questions might be offered, which human understanding has not yet answered, and which the present haste of this extract will not suffer me to dilate.

He proceeds to an humble detail of Pope's opinion: "The universe is a system, whose very essence consists in subordination; a scale of beings descend-

ing, by insensible degrees, from infinite perfection to absolute nothing; in which, though we may justly expect to find perfection in the whole, could we possibly comprehend it; yet would it be the highest absurdity to hope for it in all its parts, because the beauty and happiness of the whole depend altogether on the just inferiority of its parts; that is, on the comparative imperfections of the several beings of which it is composed.

"It would have been no more an instance of God's wisdom to have created no beings, but of the highest and most perfect order, than it would be of a painter's art to cover his whole piece with one single colour, the most beautiful he could compose. Had he confined himself to such, nothing could have existed but demi-gods, or arch-angels, and, then, all inferior orders must have been void and uninhabited; but as it is, surely, more agreeable to infinite benevolence, that all these should be filled up with beings capable of enjoying happiness themselves, and contributing to that of others, they must, necessarily, be filled with inferior beings; that is, with such as are less perfect, but from whose existence, notwithstanding that less perfection, more felicity, upon the whole, accrues to the universe, than if no such had been created. It is, moreover, highly probable, that there is such a connexion between all ranks and orders, by subordinate degrees, that they mutually support each other's existence, and every one, in its place, is absolutely necessary towards sustaining the whole vast and magnificent fabric.

"Our pretences for complaint could be of this only, that we are not so high in the scale of existence as our ignorant ambition may desire; a pretence which must eternally subsist, because, were we ever so much higher, there would be still room for infinite power to exalt us; and, since no link in the chain can be broke, the same reason for disquiet must remain to those who succeed to that chasm, which must be occasioned by our preferment. A man can have no reason to repine, that he is not an angel; nor a horse, that he is not a man; much less, that, in their several stations, they possess not the faculties of another; for this would be an insufferable misfortune."

This doctrine of the regular subordination of beings, the scale of existence, and the chain of nature, I have often considered, but always left the inquiry in doubt and uncertainty.

That every being not infinite, compared with infinity, must be imperfect, is evident to intuition; that, whatever is imperfect must have a certain line which it cannot pass, is equally certain. But the reason which determined this limit, and for which such being was suffered to advance thus far, and no farther, we shall never be able to discern. Our discoverers tell us, the creator has made beings of all orders, and that, therefore, one of them must be such as man; but this system seems to be established on a concession, which, if it be refused, cannot be extorted.

Every reason which can be brought to prove, that there are beings of every possible sort, will

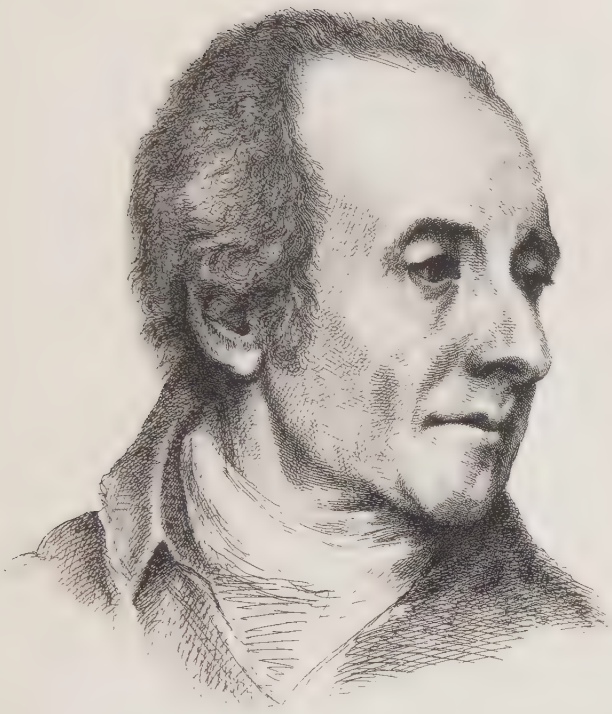
prove, that there is the greatest number possible of every sort of beings; but this, with respect to man, we know, if we know any thing, not to be true.

It does not appear, even to the imagination, that of three orders of being, the first and the third receive any advantage from the imperfection of the second, or that, indeed, they may not equally exist, though the second had never been, or should cease to be; and why should that be concluded necessary, which cannot be proved even to be useful?

The scale of existence, from infinity to nothing, cannot possibly have being. The highest being not infinite, must be, as has been often observed, at an infinite distance below infinity. Cheyne, who, with the desire inherent in mathematicians to reduce every thing to mathematical images, considers all existence as a cone; allows that the basis is at an infinite distance from the body; and in this distance between finite and infinite, there will be room, for ever, for an infinite series of indefinable existence.

Between the lowest positive existence and nothing, wherever we suppose positive existence to cease, is another chasm infinitely deep; where there is room again for endless orders of subordinate nature, continued for ever and for ever, and yet infinitely superiour to non-existence.

To these meditations humanity is unequal. But yet we may ask, not of our maker, but of each other, since, on the one side, creation, wherever it stops, must stop infinitely below infinity, and on the other, infinitely above nothing, what necessity there is, that it should proceed so far, either way, that



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beings so high or so low should ever have existed? We may ask; but, I believe, no created wisdom can give an adequate answer.

Nor is this all. In the scale, wherever it begins or ends, are infinite vacuities. At whatever distance we suppose the next order of beings to be above man, there is room for an intermediate order of beings between them; and if for one order, then for infinite orders; since every thing that admits of more or less, and consequently all the parts of that which admits them, may be infinitely divided. So that, as far as we can judge, there may be room in the vacuity between any two steps of the scale, or between any two points of the cone of being, for infinite exertion of infinite power.

Thus it appears, how little reason those, who repose their reason upon the scale of being, have to triumph over them who recur to any other expedient of solution, and what difficulties arise, on every side, to repress the rebellions of presumptuous decision: "Qui pauca considerat, facile pronunciat." In our passage through the boundless ocean of disquisition, we often take fogs for land, and, after having long toiled to approach them, find, instead of repose and harbours, new storms of objection, and fluctuations of uncertainty.

We are next entertained with Pope's alleviations of those evils which we are doomed to suffer.

"Poverty, or the want of riches, is generally compensated by having more hopes, and fewer fears, by a greater share of health, and a more exquisite relish of the smallest enjoyments, than those who

possess them are usually blessed with. The want of taste and genius, with all the pleasures that arise from them, are commonly recompensed by a more useful kind of common sense, together with a wonderful delight, as well as success, in the busy pursuits of a scrambling world. The sufferings of the sick are greatly relieved by many trifling gratifications, imperceptible to others, and, sometimes, almost repaid by the inconceivable transports occasioned by the return of health and vigour. Folly cannot be very grievous, because imperceptible; and I doubt not but there is some truth in that rant of a mad poet, that there is a pleasure in being mad, which none but madmen know. Ignorance, or the want of knowledge and literature, the appointed lot of all born to poverty and the drudgeries of life, is the only opiate capable of infusing that insensibility, which can enable them to endure the miseries of the one, and the fatigues of the other. It is a cordial, administered by the gracious hand of providence, of which they ought never to be deprived by an ill-judged and improper education. It is the basis of all subordination, the support of society, and the privilege of individuals; and I have ever thought it a most remarkable instance of the divine wisdom, that, whereas in all animals, whose individuals rise little above the rest of their species, knowledge is instinctive; in man, whose individuals are so widely different, it is acquired by education; by which means the prince and the labourer, the philosopher and the peasant, are, in some measure, fitted for their respective situations."

Much of these positions is, perhaps, true; and the whole paragraph might well pass without censure, were not objections necessary to the establishment of knowledge. Poverty is very gently paraphrased by want of riches. In that sense, almost every man may, in his own opinion, be poor. But there is another poverty, which is want of competence of all that can soften the miseries of life, of all that can diversify attention, or delight imagination. There is yet another poverty, which is want of necessaries, a species of poverty which no care of the publick, no charity of particulars, can preserve many from feeling openly, and many secretly.

That hope and fear are inseparably, or very frequently, connected with poverty and riches, my surveys of life have not informed me. The milder degrees of poverty are, sometimes, supported by hope; but the more severe often sink down in motionless despondence. Life must be seen, before it can be known. This author and Pope, perhaps, never saw the miseries which they imagine thus easy to be borne. The poor, indeed, are insensible of many little vexations, which sometimes imbitter the possessions, and pollute the enjoyments, of the rich. They are not pained by casual incivility, or mortified by the mutilation of a compliment; but this happiness is like that of a malefactor, who ceases to feel the cords that bind him, when the pincers are tearing his flesh.

That want of taste for one enjoyment is supplied by the pleasures of some other, may be fairly allowed; but the compensations of sickness I have

never found near to equivalence, and the transports of recovery only prove the intenseness of the pain.

With folly, no man is willing to confess himself very intimately acquainted, and, therefore, its pains and pleasures are kept secret. But what the author says of its happiness, seems applicable only to fatuity, or gross dulness; for that inferiority of understanding, which makes one man, without any other reason, the slave, or tool, or property of another, which makes him sometimes useless, and sometimes ridiculous, is often felt with very quick sensibility. On the happiness of madmen, as the case is not very frequent, it is not necessary to raise a disquisition, but I cannot forbear to observe, that I never yet knew disorders of mind increase felicity: every madman is either arrogant and irascible, or gloomy and suspicious, or possessed by some passion, or notion, destructive to his quiet. He has always discontent in his look, and malignity in his bosom. And, if he had the power of choice, he would soon repent who should resign his reason to secure his peace.

Concerning the portion of ignorance necessary to make the condition of the lower classes of mankind safe to the publick, and tolerable to themselves, both morals and policy exact a nicer inquiry than will be very soon or very easily made. There is, undoubtedly, a degree of knowledge which will direct a man to refer all to providence, and to acquiesce in the condition with which omniscient goodness has determined to allot him; to consider this world as a phantom, that must soon glide from

before his eyes, and the distresses and vexations that encompass him, as dust scattered in his path, as a blast that chills him for a moment, and passes off for ever.

Such wisdom, arising from the comparison of a part with the whole of our existence, those that want it most cannot possibly obtain from philosophy; nor, unless the method of education, and the general tenour of life are changed, will very easily receive it from religion. The bulk of mankind is not likely to be very wise or very good; and I know not, whether there are not many states of life, in which all knowledge, less than the highest wisdom, will produce discontent and danger. I believe it may be sometimes found, that a *little learning* is, to a poor man, a *dangerous thing*. But such is the condition of humanity, that we easily see, or quickly feel the wrong, but cannot always distinguish the right. Whatever knowledge is superfluous, in irremediable poverty, is hurtful, but the difficulty is to determine when poverty is irremediable, and at what point superfluity begins. Gross ignorance every man has found equally dangerous with perverted knowledge. Men, left wholly to their appetites and their instincts, with little sense of moral or religious obligation, and with very faint distinctions of right and wrong, can never be safely employed, or confidently trusted; they can be honest only by obstinacy, and diligent only by compulsion or caprice. Some instruction, therefore, is necessary, and much, perhaps, may be dangerous.

Though it should be granted, that those who are *born to poverty and drudgery*, should not be *deprived*, by an *improper education*, of the *opiate of ignorance;* even this concession will not be of much use to direct our practice, unless it be determined, who are those that are *born to poverty*. To entail irreversible poverty upon generation after generation, only because the ancestor happened to be poor, is, in itself, cruel, if not unjust, and is wholly contrary to the maxims of a commercial nation, which always suppose and promote a rotation of property, and offer every individual a chance of mending his condition by his diligence. Those, who communicate literature to the son of a poor man consider him, as one not born to poverty, but to the necessity of deriving a better fortune from himself. In this attempt, as in others, many fail and many succeed. Those that fail, will feel their misery more acutely; but since poverty is now confessed to be such a calamity, as cannot be borne without the opiate of insensibility, I hope the happiness of those whom education enables to escape from it, may turn the balance against that exacerbation which the others suffer.

I am always afraid of determining on the side of envy or cruelty. The privileges of education may, sometimes, be improperly bestowed, but I shall always fear to withhold them, lest I should be yielding to the suggestions of pride, while I persuade myself that I am following the maxims of policy; and, under the appearance of salutary restraints, should be indulging the lust of dominion, and

that malevolence which delights in seeing others depressed.

Pope's doctrine is, at last, exhibited in a comparison, which, like other proofs of the same kind, is better adapted to delight the fancy than convince the reason.

"Thus the universe resembles a large and well-regulated family, in which all the officers and servants, and even the domestick animals, are subservient to each other, in a proper subordination: each enjoys the privileges and perquisites peculiar to his place, and, at the same time, contributes, by that just subordination, to the magnificence and happiness of the whole."

The magnificence of a house is of use or pleasure always to the master, and sometimes to the domesticks. But the magnificence of the universe adds nothing to the supreme being; for any part of its inhabitants, with which human knowledge is acquainted, an universe much less spacious or splendid would have been sufficient; and of happiness it does not appear, that any is communicated from the beings of a lower world to those of a higher.

The inquiry after the cause of natural evil is continued in the third letter, in which, as in the former, there is mixture of borrowed truth, and native folly, of some notions, just and trite, with others uncommon and ridiculous.

His opinion of the value and importance of happiness is certainly just, and I shall insert it; not that it will give any information to any reader, but it may serve to show, how the most common no-

tion may be swelled in sound, and diffused in bulk, till it shall, perhaps, astonish the author himself.

"Happiness is the only thing of real value in existence, neither riches, nor power, nor wisdom, nor learning, nor strength, nor beauty, nor virtue, nor religion, nor even life itself, being of any importance, but as they contribute to its production. All these are, in themselves, neither good nor evil: happiness alone is their great end, and they are desirable only as they tend to promote it."

Success produces confidence. After this discovery of the value of happiness, he proceeds, without any distrust of himself, to tell us what has been hid from all former inquirers.

"The true solution of this important question, so long and so vainly searched for by the philosophers of all ages and all countries, I take to be, at last, no more than this, that these real evils proceed from the same source as those imaginary ones of imperfection, before treated of, namely, from that subordination, without which no created system can subsist; all subordination implying imperfection, all imperfection evil, and all evil some kind of inconveniency or suffering: so that there must be particular inconveniencies and sufferings annexed to every particular rank of created beings by the circumstances of things, and their modes of existence.

"God, indeed, might have made us quite other creatures, and placed us in a world quite differently constituted; but then we had been no longer men, and whatever beings had occupied our stations in

the universal system, they must have been liable to the same inconveniencies."

In all this, there is nothing that can silence the inquiries of curiosity, or calm the perturbations of doubt. Whether subordination implies imperfection may be disputed. The means respecting themselves may be as perfect as the end. The weed, as a weed, is no less perfect than the oak, as an oak. That *imperfection implies evil, and evil suffering*, is by no means evident. Imperfection may imply privative evil, or the absence of some good, but this privation produces no suffering, but by the help of knowledge. An infant at the breast is yet an imperfect man, but there is no reason for belief, that he is unhappy by his immaturity, unless some positive pain be superadded.

When this author presumes to speak of the universe, I would advise him a little to distrust his own faculties, however large and comprehensive. Many words, easily understood on common occasions, become uncertain and figurative, when applied to the works of omnipotence. Subordination, in human affairs, is well understood; but, when it is attributed to the universal system, its meaning grows less certain, like the petty distinctions of locality, which are of good use upon our own globe, but have no meaning with regard to infinite space, in which nothing is *high* or *low*.

That, if man, by exaltation to a higher nature, were exempted from the evils which he now suffers, some other being must suffer them; that, if man were not man, some other being must be man, is a

position arising from his established notion of the scale of being. A notion to which Pope has given some importance, by adopting it, and of which I have, therefore, endeavoured to show the uncertainty and inconsistency. This scale of being I have demonstrated to be raised by presumptuous imagination, to rest on nothing at the bottom, to lean on nothing at the top, and to have vacuities, from step to step, through which any order of being may sink into nihility without any inconvenience, so far as we can judge, to the next rank above or below it. We are, therefore, little enlightened by a writer who tells us, that any being in the state of man must suffer what man suffers, when the only question that requires to be resolved is: Why any being is in this state.

Of poverty and labour he gives just and elegant representations, which yet do not remove the difficulty of the first and fundamental question, though supposing the present state of man necessary, they may supply some motives to content.

"Poverty is what all could not possibly have been exempted from, not only by reason of the fluctuating nature of human possessions, but because the world could not subsist without it; for, had all been rich, none could have submitted to the commands of another, or the necessary drudgeries of life; thence all governments must have been dissolved, arts neglected, and lands uncultivated, and so an universal penury have overwhelmed all, instead of now and then pinching a few. Hence, by the by, appears the great excellence of charity, by which men

are enabled, by a particular distribution of the blessings and enjoyments of life, on proper occasions, to prevent that poverty, which, by a general one, omnipotence itself could never have prevented; so that, by enforcing this duty, God, as it were, demands our assistance to promote universal happiness, and to shut out misery at every door, where it strives to intrude itself.

"Labour, indeed, God might easily have excused us from, since, at his command, the earth would readily have poured forth all her treasures, without our inconsiderable assistance; but, if the severest labour cannot sufficiently subdue the malignity of human nature, what plots and machinations, what wars, rapine, and devastation, what profligacy and licentiousness, must have been the consequences of universal idleness! So that labour ought only to be looked upon, as a task kindly imposed upon us by our indulgent creator, necessary to preserve our health, our safety, and our innocence."

I am afraid, that "the latter end of his commonwealth forgets the beginning." If God *could easily have excused us from labour*, I do not comprehend why *he could not possibly have exempted all from poverty*. For poverty, in its easier and more tolerable degree, is little more than necessity of labour; and, in its more severe and deplorable state, little more than inability for labour. To be poor is to work for others, or to want the succour of others, without work. And the same exuberant fertility, which would make work unnecessary, might make poverty impossible.

Surely, a man who seems not completely master of his own opinion, should have spoken more cautiously of omnipotence, nor have presumed to say what it could perform, or what it could prevent. I am in doubt, whether those, who stand highest in *the scale of being*, speak thus confidently of the dispensations of their maker:

"For fools rush in, where angels fear to tread."

Of our inquietudes of mind, his account is still less reasonable: "Whilst men are injured, they must be inflamed with anger; and, whilst they see cruelties, they must be melted with pity; whilst they perceive danger, they must be sensible of fear." This is to give a reason for all evil, by showing, that one evil produces another. If there is danger, there ought to be fear; but, if fear is an evil, why should there be danger? His vindication of pain is of the same kind: pain is useful to alarm us, that we may shun greater evils, but those greater evils must be presupposed, that the fitness of pain may appear.

Treating on death, he has expressed the known and true doctrine with sprightliness of fancy, and neatness of diction. I shall, therefore, insert it. There are truths which, as they are always necessary, do not grow stale by repetition.

"Death, the last and most dreadful of all evils, is so far from being one, that it is the infallible cure for all others.

To die, is landing on some silent shore,
Where billows never beat, nor tempests roar.
Ere well we feel the friendly stroke, 'tis o'er. GARTH.

For, abstracted from the sickness and sufferings usually attending it, it is no more than the expiration of that term of life God was pleased to bestow on us, without any claim or merit on our part. But was it an evil ever so great, it could not be remedied, but by one much greater, which is, by living for ever; by which means, our wickedness, unrestrained by the prospect of a future state, would grow so insupportable, our sufferings so intolerable by perseverance, and our pleasures so tiresome by repetition, that no being in the universe could be so completely miserable, as a species of immortal men. We have no reason, therefore, to look upon death as an evil, or to fear it as a punishment, even without any supposition of a future life: but, if we consider it, as a passage to a more perfect state, or a remove only in an eternal succession of still-improving states, (for which we have the strongest reasons,) it will then appear a new favour from the divine munificence; and a man must be as absurd to repine at dying, as a traveller would be, who proposed to himself a delightful tour through various unknown countries, to lament, that he cannot take up his residence at the first dirty inn, which he baits at on the road.

"The instability of human life, or of the changes of its successive periods, of which we so frequently complain, are no more than the necessary progress of it to this necessary conclusion; and are so far from being evils, deserving these complaints, that they are the source of our greatest pleasures, as they are the source of all novelty, from which our greatest

pleasures are ever derived. The continual succession of seasons in the human life, by daily presenting to us new scenes, render it agreeable, and, like those of the year, afford us delights by their change, which the choicest of them could not give us by their continuance. In the spring of life, the gilding of the sunshine, the verdure of the fields, and the variegated paintings of the sky, are so exquisite in the eyes of infants, at their first looking abroad into a new world, as nothing, perhaps, afterwards can equal: the heat and vigour of the succeeding summer of youth, ripens for us new pleasures, the blooming maid, the nightly revel, and the jovial chase: the serene autumn of complete manhood feasts us with the golden harvests of our worldly pursuits: nor is the hoary winter of old age destitute of its peculiar comforts and enjoyments, of which the recollection and relation of those past, are, perhaps, none of the least: and, at last, death opens to us a new prospect, from whence we shall, probably, look back upon the diversions and occupations of this world, with the same contempt we do now on our tops and hobby horses, and with the same surprise, that they could ever so much entertain or engage us."

I would not willingly detract from the beauty of this paragraph; and, in gratitude to him who has so well inculcated such important truths, I will venture to admonish him, since the chief comfort of the old is the recollection of the past, so to employ his time and his thoughts, that, when the imbecility of age shall come upon him, he may be able to recreate its languors, by the remembrance of hours spent, not

in presumptuous decisions, but modest inquiries; not in dogmatical limitations of omnipotence, but in humble acquiescence, and fervent adoration. Old age will show him, that much of the book, now before us, has no other use than to perplex the scrupulous, and to shake the weak, to encourage impious presumption, or stimulate idle curiosity.

Having thus despatched the consideration of particular evils, he comes, at last, to a general reason, for which *evil* may be said to be *our good.* He is of opinion, that there is some inconceivable benefit in pain, abstractedly considered; that pain, however inflicted, or wherever felt, communicates some good to the general system of being, and, that every animal is, some way or other, the better for the pain of every other animal. This opinion he carries so far, as to suppose, that there passes some principle of union through all animal life, as attraction is communicated to all corporeal nature; and, that the evils suffered on this globe, may, by some inconceivable means, contribute to the felicity of the inhabitants of the remotest planet.

How the origin of evil is brought nearer to human conception, by any *inconceivable* means, I am not able to discover. We believed, that the present system of creation was right, though we could not explain the adaptation of one part to the other, or for the whole succession of causes and consequences. Where has this inquirer added to the little knowledge that we had before? He has told us of the benefits of evil, which no man feels, and relations between distant parts of the universe, which he can-

not himself conceive. There was enough in this question inconceivable before, and we have little advantage from a new inconceivable solution.

I do not mean to reproach this author for not knowing what is equally hidden from learning and from ignorance. The shame is, to impose words, for ideas, upon ourselves or others. To imagine, that we are going forward, when we are only turning round. To think, that there is any difference between him that gives no reason, and him that gives a reason, which, by his own confession, cannot be conceived.

But, that he may not be thought to conceive nothing but things inconceivable, he has, at last, thought on a way, by which human sufferings may produce good effects. He imagines, that as we have not only animals for food, but choose some for our diversion, the same privilege may be allowed to some beings above us, *who may deceive, torment, or destroy us, for the ends, only, of their own pleasure or utility.* This he again finds impossible to be conceived, *but that impossibility lessens not the probability of the conjecture, which, by analogy, is so strongly confirmed.*

I cannot resist the temptation of contemplating this analogy, which, I think, he might have carried further, very much to the advantage of his argument. He might have shown, that these "hunters, whose game is man," have many sports analogous to our own. As we drown whelps and kittens, they amuse themselves, now and then, with sinking a ship, and stand round the fields of Blenheim, or the walls of Prague, as we encircle a cockpit. As we

shoot a bird flying, they take a man in the midst of his business or pleasure, and knock him down with an apoplexy. Some of them, perhaps, are virtuosi, and delight in the operations of an asthma, as a human philosopher in the effects of the air-pump. To swell a man with a tympany is as good sport as to blow a frog. Many a merry bout have these frolick beings at the vicissitudes of an ague, and good sport it is to see a man tumble with an epilepsy, and revive and tumble again, and all this he knows not why. As they are wiser and more powerful than we, they have more exquisite diversions; for we have no way of procuring any sport so brisk and so lasting, as the paroxysms of the gout and stone, which, undoubtedly, must make high mirth, especially if the play be a little diversified with the blunders and puzzles of the blind and deaf. We know not how far their sphere of observation may extend. Perhaps, now and then, a merry being may place himself in such a situation, as to enjoy, at once, all the varieties of an epidemical disease, or amuse his leisure with the tossings and contortions of every possible pain, exhibited together.

One sport the merry malice of these beings has found means of enjoying, to which we have nothing equal or similar. They now and then catch a mortal, proud of his parts, and flattered either by the submission of those who court his kindness, or the notice of those who suffer him to court theirs. A head, thus prepared for the reception of false opinions, and the projection of vain designs, they easily fill with idle notions, till, in time, they make their plaything

an author; their first diversion commonly begins with an ode or an epistle, then rises, perhaps, to a political irony, and is, at last, brought to its height, by a treatise of philosophy. Then begins the poor animal to entangle himself in sophisms, and flounder in absurdity, to talk confidently of the scale of being, and to give solutions which himself confesses impossible to be understood. Sometimes, however, it happens, that their pleasure is without much mischief. The author feels no pain, but while they are wondering at the extravagance of his opinion, and pointing him out to one another, as a new example of human folly, he is enjoying his own applause and that of his companions, and, perhaps, is elevated with the hope of standing at the head of a new sect.

Many of the books which now crowd the world, may be justly suspected to be written for the sake of some invisible order of beings, for surely they are of no use to any of the corporeal inhabitants of the world. Of the productions of the last bounteous year, how many can be said to serve any purpose of use or pleasure! The only end of writing is to enable the readers better to enjoy life, or better to endure it; and how will either of those be put more in our power, by him who tells us, that we are puppets, of which some creature, not much wiser than ourselves, manages the wires! That a set of beings, unseen and unheard, are hovering about us, trying experiments upon our sensibility, putting us in agonies, to see our limbs quiver; torturing us to madness, that they may laugh at our vagaries; sometimes obstructing the bile, that they may see how a man looks, when

he is yellow; sometimes breaking a traveller's bones, to try how he will get home; sometimes wasting a man to a skeleton, and sometimes killing him fat, for the greater elegance of his hide.

This is an account of natural evil, which though, like the rest, not quite new, is very entertaining, though I know not how much it may contribute to patience. The only reason why we should contemplate evil is, that we may bear it better; and I am afraid nothing is much more placidly endured, for the sake of making others sport.

The first pages of the fourth letter are such, as incline me both to hope and wish that I shall find nothing to blame in the succeding part. He offers a criterion of action, on account of virtue and vice, for which I have often contended, and which must be embraced by all who are willing to know, why they act, or why they forbear to give any reason of their conduct to themselves or others.

"In order to find out the true origin of moral evil, it will be necessary, in the first place, to enquire into its nature and essence; or, what it is that constitutes one action evil, and another good. Various have been the opinions of various authors on this criterion of virtue; and this variety has rendered that doubtful, which must, otherwise, have been clear and manifest to the meanest capacity. Some, indeed, have denied, that there is any such thing, because different ages and nations have entertained different sentiments concerning it; but this is just as reasonable, as to assert, that there are neither sun, moon, nor stars, because astronomers have sup-

ported different systems of the motions and magnitudes of these celestial bodies. Some have placed it in conformity to truth, some to the fitness of things, and others to the will of God: but all this is merely superficial: they resolve us not, why truth, or the fitness of things, are either eligible or obligatory, or why God should require us to act in one manner rather than another. The true reason of which can possibly be no other than this, because some actions produce happiness, and others misery; so that all moral good and evil are nothing more than the production of natural. This alone it is that makes truth preferable to falsehood, this, that determines the fitness of things, and this that induces God to command some actions, and forbid others. They who extol the truth, beauty, and harmony of virtue, exclusive of its consequences, deal but in pompous nonsense; and they, who would persuade us, that good and evil are things indifferent, depending wholly on the will of God, do but confound the nature of things, as well as all our notions of God himself, by representing him capable of willing contradictions; that is, that we should be, and be happy, and, at the same time, that we should torment and destroy each other; for injuries cannot be made benefits, pain cannot be made pleasure, and, consequently, vice cannot be made virtue, by any power whatever. It is the consequences, therefore, of all human actions that must stamp their value. So far as the general practice of any action tends to produce good, and introduce happiness into the world, so far we may pronounce it virtuous; so

much evil as it occasions, such is the degree of vice it contains. I say the general practice, because we must always remember, in judging by this rule, to apply it only to the general species of actions, and not to particular actions; for the infinite wisdom of God, desirous to set bounds to the destructive consequences, which must, otherwise, have followed from the universal depravity of mankind, has so wonderfully contrived the nature of things, that our most vitious actions may, sometimes, accidentally and collaterally, produce good. Thus, for instance, robbery may disperse useless hoards to the benefit of the public; adultery may bring heirs, and good humour too, into many families, where they would otherwise have been wanting; and murder, free the world from tyrants and oppressors. Luxury maintains its thousands, and vanity its ten thousands. Superstition and arbitrary power contribute to the grandeur of many nations, and the liberties of others are preserved by the perpetual contentions of avarice, knavery, selfishness, and ambition; and thus the worst of vices, and the worst of men, are often compelled, by providence, to serve the most beneficial purposes, contrary to their own malevolent tendencies and inclinations; and thus private vices become public benefits, by the force only of accidental circumstances. But this impeaches not the truth of the criterion of virtue, before mentioned, the only solid foundation on which any true system of ethics can be built, the only plain, simple, and uniform rule, by which we can pass any judgment on our actions; but by this we may be enabled, not

only to determine which are good, and which are evil, but, almost mathematically, to demonstrate the proportion of virtue or vice which belongs to each, by comparing them with the degrees of happiness or misery which they occasion. But, though the production of happiness is the essence of virtue, it is by no means the end; the great end is the probation of mankind, or the giving them an opportunity of exalting or degrading themselves, in another state, by their behaviour in the present. And thus, indeed, it answers two most important purposes: those are, the conservation of our happiness, and the test of our obedience; or, had not such a test seemed necessary to God's infinite wisdom, and productive of universal good, he would never have permitted the happiness of men, even in this life, to have depended on so precarious a tenure, as their mutual good behaviour to each other. For it is observable, that he, who best knows our formation, has trusted no one thing of importance to our reason or virtue: he trusts only to our appetites for the support of the individual, and the continuance of our species; to our vanity, or compassion, for our bounty to others; and to our fears, for the preservation of ourselves; often to our vices, for the support of government, and, sometimes, to our follies, for the preservation of our religion. But, since some test of our obedience was necessary, nothing, sure, could have been commanded for that end, so fit and proper, and, at the same time, so useful, as the practice of virtue; nothing could have been so justly rewarded with happiness, as the

production of happiness, in conformity to the will of God. It is this conformity, alone, which adds merit to virtue, and constitutes the essential difference between morality and religion. Morality obliges men to live honestly and soberly, because such behaviour is most conducive to public happiness, and, consequently, to their own; religion, to pursue the same course, because conformable to the will of their creator. Morality induces them to embrace virtue, from prudential considerations; religion, from those of gratitude and obedience. Morality, therefore, entirely abstracted from religion, can have nothing meritorious in it; it being but wisdom, prudence, or good economy, which, like health, beauty, or riches, are rather obligations conferred upon us by God, than merits in us towards him; for, though we may be justly punished for injuring ourselves, we can claim no reward for self-preservation; as suicide deserves punishment and infamy, but a man deserves no reward or honours for not being guilty of it. This I take to be the meaning of all those passages in our scriptures, in which works are represented to have no merit without faith; that is, not without believing in historical facts, in creeds, and articles, but, without being done in pursuance of our belief in God, and in obedience to his commands. And now, having mentioned scripture, I cannot omit observing, that the christian is the only religious or moral institution in the world, that ever set, in a right light, these two material points, the essence and the end of virtue, that ever founded the one in the production of happiness, that is, in univer-

sal benevolence, or, in their language, charity to all men; the other, in the probation of man, and his obedience to his creator. Sublime and magnificent as was the philosophy of the ancients, all their moral systems were deficient in these two important articles. They were all built on the sandy foundations of the innate beauty of virtue, or enthusiastic patriotism; and their great point in view was the contemptible reward of human glory; foundations, which were, by no means, able to support the magnificent structures which they erected upon them; for the beauty of virtue, independent of its effects, is unmeaning nonsense; patriotism, which injures mankind in general, for the sake of a particular country, is but a more extended selfishness, and really criminal; and all human glory, but a mean and ridiculous delusion.

"The whole affair, then, of religion and morality, the subject of so many thousand volumes, is, in short, no more than this: the supreme being, infinitely good as well as powerful, desirous to diffuse happiness by all possible means, has created innumerable ranks and orders of beings, all subservient to each other by proper subordination. One of these is occupied by man, a creature endued with such a certain degree of knowledge, reason, and freewill, as is suitable to his situation, and placed, for a time, on this globe, as in a school of probation and education. Here he has an opportunity given him of improving or debasing his nature, in such a manner, as to render himself fit for a rank of higher perfection and happiness, or to degrade himself to a state

of greater imperfection and misery; necessary, indeed, towards carrying on the business of the universe, but very grievous and burdensome to those individuals who, by their own misconduct, are obliged to submit to it. The test of this his behaviour is doing good, that is, cooperating with his creator, as far as his narrow sphere of action will permit, in the production of happiness. And thus the happiness and misery of a future state will be the just reward or punishment of promoting or preventing happiness in this. So artificially, by this means, is the nature of all human virtue and vice contrived, that their rewards and punishments are woven, as it were, in their very essence; their immediate effects give us a foretaste of their future, and their fruits, in the present life, are the proper samples of what they must unavoidably produce in another. We have reason given us to distinguish these consequences, and regulate our conduct; and, lest that should neglect its post, conscience also is appointed, as an instinctive kind of monitor, perpetually to remind us both of our interest and our duty."

"Si sic omnia dixisset!" To this account of the essence of vice and virtue, it is only necessary to add, that the consequences of human actions being sometimes uncertain, and sometimes remote, it is not possible, in many cases, for most men, nor in all cases, for any man, to determine what actions will ultimately produce happiness, and, therefore, it was proper that revelation should lay down a rule to be followed, invariably, in opposition to appearances, and, in every change of circumstances, by

which we may be certain to promote the general felicity, and be set free from the dangerous temptation of *doing evil that good may come*. Because it may easily happen, and, in effect, will happen, very frequently, that our own private happiness may be promoted by an act injurious to others, when yet no man can be obliged, by nature, to prefer, ultimately, the happiness of others to his own; therefore, to the instructions of infinite wisdom, it was necessary that infinite power should add penal sanctions. That every man, to whom those instructions shall be imparted, may know, that he can never, ultimately, injure himself by benefiting others, or, ultimately, by injuring others benefit himself; but that, however the lot of the good and bad may be huddled together in the seeming confusion of our present state, the time shall undoubtedly come, when the most virtuous will be most happy.

I am sorry, that the remaining part of this letter is not equal to the first. The author has, indeed, engaged in a disquisition, in which we need not wonder if he fails, in the solution of questions on which philosophers have employed their abilities from the earliest times,

"And found no end, in wand'ring mazes lost."

He denies, that man was created *perfect*, because the system requires subordination, and because the power of losing his perfection, of "rendering himself wicked and miserable, is the highest imperfection imaginable." Besides, the regular gradations of the scale of being required, somewhere, "such a

creature as man, with all his infirmities about him; and the total removal of those would be altering his nature, and, when he became perfect, he must cease to be man."

I have already spent some considerations on the *scale of being*, of which, yet, I am obliged to renew the mention, whenever a new argument is made to rest upon it; and I must, therefore, again remark, that consequences cannot have greater certainty than the postulate from which they are drawn, and that no system can be more hypothetical than this, and, perhaps, no hypothesis more absurd.

He again deceives himself with respect to the perfection with which *man* is held to be originally vested. "That man came perfect, that is, endued with all possible perfection, out of the hands of his creator, is a false notion derived from the philosophers.—The universal system required subordination, and, consequently, comparative imperfection." That *man was ever endued with all possible perfection*, that is, with all perfection, of which the idea is not contradictory, or destructive of itself, is, undoubtedly, *false*. But it can hardly be called *a false notion*, because no man ever thought it, nor can it be derived from the *philosophers;* for, without pretending to guess what philosophers he may mean, it is very safe to affirm, that no philosopher ever said it. Of those who now maintain that *man* was once perfect, who may very easily be found, let the author inquire, whether *man* was ever omniscient, whether he was ever omnipotent; whether he ever had even the lower power of archangels or angels. Their answers

will soon inform him, that the supposed perfection of *man* was not absolute, but respective; that he was perfect, in a sense consistent enough with subordination, perfect, not as compared with different beings, but with himself in his present degeneracy; not perfect, as an angel, but perfect, as man.

From this perfection, whatever it was, he thinks it necessary that man should be debarred, because pain is necessary to the good of the universe; and the pain of one order of beings extending its salutary influence to innumerable orders above and below, it was necessary that man should suffer; but, because it is not suitable to justice, that pain should be inflicted on innocence, it was necessary that man should be criminal.

This is given as a satisfactory account of the original of moral evil, which amounts only to this, that God created beings, whose guilt he foreknew, in order that he might have proper objects of pain, because the pain of part is, no man knows how or why, necessary to the felicity of the whole.

The perfection which man once had, may be so easily conceived, that, without any unusual strain of imagination, we can figure its revival. All the duties to God or man, that are neglected, we may fancy performed; all the crimes, that are committed, we may conceive forborne. Man will then be restored to his moral perfections; and into what head can it enter, that, by this change, the universal system would be shaken, or the condition of any order of beings altered for the worse?

He comes, in the fifth letter, to political, and, in

the sixth, to religious evils. Of political evil, if we suppose the origin of moral evil discovered, the account is by no means difficult; polity being only the conduct of immoral men in publick affairs. The evils of each particular kind of government are very clearly and elegantly displayed, and, from their secondary causes, very rationally deduced; but the first cause lies still in its ancient obscurity. There is, in this letter, nothing new, nor any thing eminently instructive; one of his practical deductions, that "from government, evils cannot be eradicated, and their excess only can be prevented," has been always allowed; the question, upon which all dissension arises, is, when that excess begins, at what point men shall cease to bear, and attempt to remedy.

Another of his precepts, though not new, well deserves to be transcribed, because it cannot be too frequently impressed.

"What has here been said of their imperfections and abuses, is, by no means, intended as a defence of them: every wise man ought to redress them to the utmost of his power; which can be effected by one method only, that is, by a reformation of manners; for, as all political evils derive their original from moral, these can never be removed, until those are first amended. He, therefore, who strictly adheres to virtue and sobriety in his conduct, and enforces them by his example, does more real service to a state, than he who displaces a minister, or dethrones a tyrant: this gives but a temporary relief, but that exterminates the cause of the disease. No immoral man, then, can possibly be a true patriot;

and all those who profess outrageous zeal for the liberty and prosperity of their country, and, at the same time, infringe her laws, affront her religion, and debauch her people, are but despicable quacks, by fraud or ignorance increasing the disorders they pretend to remedy."

Of religion he has said nothing but what he has learned, or might have learned, from the divines; that it is not universal, because it must be received upon conviction, and successively received by those whom conviction reached; that its evidences and sanctions are not irresistible, because it was intended to induce, not to compel; and that it is obscure, because we want faculties to comprehend it. What he means by his assertion, that it wants policy, I do not well understand; he does not mean to deny, that a good christian will be a good governour, or a good subject; and he has before justly observed, that the good man only is a patriot.

Religion has been, he says, corrupted by the wickedness of those to whom it was communicated, and has lost part of its efficacy, by its connexion with temporal interest and human passion.

He justly observes, that from all this no conclusion can be drawn against the divine original of christianity, since the objections arise not from the nature of the revelation, but of him to whom it is communicated.

All this is known, and all this is true; but why, we have not yet discovered. Our author, if I understand him right, pursues the argument thus: the religion of man produces evils, because the morality

of man is imperfect; his morality is imperfect, that he may be justly a subject of punishment; he is made subject to punishment, because the pain of part is necessary to the happiness of the whole; pain is necessary to happiness, no mortal can tell why, or how.

Thus, after having clambered, with great labour, from one step of argumentation to another, instead of rising into the light of knowledge, we are devolved back into dark ignorance; and all our effort ends in belief, that for the evils of life there is some good reason, and in confession, that the reason cannot be found. This is all that has been produced by the revival of Chrysippus's untractableness of matter, and the Arabian scale of existence. A system has been raised, which is so ready to fall to pieces of itself, that no great praise can be derived from its destruction. To object, is always easy, and, it has been well observed by a late writer, that "the hand which cannot build a hovel, may demolish a temple"[m].

Review of the History of the Royal Society of London

for improving of natural knowledge

from its first rise

In which the most considerable papers communicated to the society, which have, hitherto, not been published, are inserted, in their proper order, as a supplement to the Philosophical Transactions. By Thomas Birch, D. D. secretary to the Royal society, 2 vols. 4to.

This book might, more properly, have been entitled by the author, a diary than a history, as it proceeds regularly from day to day, so minutely, as to num-

[m] New Practice of Physick.

ber over the members present at each committee, and so slowly, that two large volumes contain only the transactions of the eleven first years from the institution of the society.

I am, yet, far from intending to represent this work as useless. Many particularities are of importance to one man, though they appear trifling to another; and it is always more safe to admit copiousness, than to effect brevity. Many informations will be afforded by this book to the biographer. I know not where else it can be found, but here, and in Ward, that Cowley was doctor in physick. And, whenever any other institution, of the same kind, shall be attempted, the exact relation of the progress of the Royal society may furnish precedents.

These volumes consist of an exact journal of the society; of some papers delivered to them, which, though registered and preserved, had been never printed; and of short memoirs of the more eminent members, inserted at the end of the year in which each died.

The original of the society is placed earlier in this history than in that of Dr. Sprat. Theodore Haak, a German of the Palatinate, in 1645, proposed, to some inquisitive and learned men, a weekly meeting, for the cultivation of natural knowledge. The first associates, whose names ought, surely, to be preserved, were Dr. Wilkins, Dr. Wallis, Dr. Goddard, Dr. Ent, Dr. Glisson, Dr. Merret, Mr. Foster of Gresham, and Mr. Haak. Sometime afterwards, Wilkins, Wallis, and Goddard, being removed to Oxford, carried on the same design there by stated

meetings, and adopted into their society Dr. Ward, Dr. Bathurst, Dr. Petty, and Dr. Willis.

The Oxford society coming to London, in 1659, joined their friends, and augmented their number, and, for some time, met in Gresham college. After the restoration, their number was again increased, and on the 28th of November, 1660, a select party happening to retire for conversation, to Mr. Rooke's apartment in Gresham college, formed the first plan of a regular society. Here Dr. Sprat's history begins, and, therefore, from this period, the proceedings are well known[n].

Review of General History of Polybius in five books, translated from the Greek, by Mr. Hampton

This appears to be one of the books, which will long do honour to the present age. It has been, by some remarker, observed, that no man ever grew immortal by a translation; and, undoubtedly, translations into the prose of a living language must be laid aside, whenever the language changes, because the matter being always to be found in the original, contributes nothing to the preservation of the form superinduced by the translator. But such versions may last long, though they can scarcely last always; and there is reason to believe that this will grow in reputation, while the English tongue continues in its present state.

The great difficulty of a translator is to preserve the native form of his language, and the unconstrained manner of an original writer. This Mr.

[n] From the Literary Magazine, 1756.

Hampton seems to have attained, in a degree of which there are few examples. His book has the dignity of antiquity, and the easy flow of a modern composition.

It were, perhaps, to be desired, that he had illustrated, with notes, an author which must have many difficulties to an English reader, and, particularly, that he had explained the ancient art of war; but these omissions may be easily supplied, by an inferiour hand, from the antiquaries and commentators.

To note omissions, where there is so much performed, would be invidious, and to commend is unnecessary, where the excellence of the work may be more easily and effectually shown, by exhibiting a specimen[o].

Review of Miscellanies on Moral and Religious subjects

in prose and verse; by elizabeth harrison

This volume, though only one name appears upon the first page, has been produced by the contribution of many hands, and printed by the encouragement of a numerous subscription, both which favours seem to be deserved by the modesty and piety of her on whom they were bestowed.

The authors of the essays in prose seem, generally, to have imitated, or tried to imitate, the copiousness and luxuriance of Mrs. Rowe; this, however, is not all their praise, they have laboured to add to her brightness of imagery, her purity of sentiments. The poets have had Dr. Watts before their eyes, a

[o] From the Literary Magazine, 1756.

writer who, if he stood not in the first class of genius, compensated that defect, by a ready application of his powers to the promotion of piety. The attempt to employ the ornaments of romance in the decoration of religion was, I think, first made by Mr. Boyle's Martyrdom of Theodora; but Boyle's philosophical studies did not allow him time for the cultivation of style, and the completion of the great design was reserved for Mrs. Rowe. Dr. Watts was one of the first who taught the dissenters to write and speak like other men, by showing them, that elegance might consist with piety. They would have both done honour to a better society, for they had that charity which might well make their failings forgotten, and with which the whole christian world might wish for communion. They were pure from all the heresies of an age, to which every opinion is become a favourite, that the universal church has, hitherto, detested.

This praise the general interest of mankind requires to be given to writers who please, and do not corrupt, who instruct, and do not weary. But to them all human eulogies are vain, whom, I believe applauded by angels and numbered with the just[p].

[p] From the Literary Magazine, 1756.— There are other reviews of books by Dr. Johnson, in this magazine, but, in general, very short, and consisting chiefly of a few introductory remarks, and an extract. That on Mrs. Harrison's Miscellanies may be accounted somewhat interesting, from the notice of Dr. Watts.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

ACCOUNT OF A BOOK ENTITLED AN HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL ENQUIRY INTO THE EVIDENCE PRODUCED BY THE EARLS OF MORAY AND MORTON AGAINST [q]

WITH AN EXAMINATION OF THE REVEREND DR. ROBERTSON'S DISSERTATION, AND MR. HUME'S HISTORY, WITH RESPECT TO THAT EVIDENCE [r]

We live in an age, in which there is much talk of independence, of private judgment, of liberty of thought, and liberty of press. Our clamorous praises of liberty sufficiently prove that we enjoy it; and if, by liberty, nothing else be meant, than security from the persecutions of power, it is so fully possessed by us, that little more is to be desired, except that one should talk of it less, and use it better.

But a social being can scarcely rise to complete independence; he that has any wants, which others can supply, must study the gratification of them, whose assistance he expects; this is equally true, whether his wants be wants of nature, or of vanity. The writers of the present time are not always candidates for preferment, nor often the hirelings of a patron. They profess to serve no interest, and speak with loud contempt of sycophants and slaves.

There is, however, a power, from whose influence neither they, nor their predecessors, have ever been free. Those, who have set greatness at defiance, have yet been the slaves of fashion. When an opinion has once become popular, very few are willing to oppose it. Idleness is more willing to credit than inquire; cowardice is afraid of controversy, and vanity of answer; and he that writes merely for

[q] Written by Mr. Tytler, of Edinburgh.

[r] Printed in the Gentleman's Magazine, October, 1760.

sale, is tempted to court purchasers by flattering the prejudices of the publick.

It has now been fashionable, for near half a century, to defame and vilify the house of Stuart, and to exalt and magnify the reign of Elizabeth. The Stuarts have found few apologists, for the dead cannot pay for praise; and who will, without reward, oppose the tide of popularity? yet there remains, still, among us, not wholly extinguished, a zeal for truth, a desire of establishing right, in opposition to fashion. The author, whose work is now before us, has attempted a vindication of Mary of Scotland, whose name has, for some years, been generally resigned to infamy, and who has been considered, as the murderer of her husband, and condemned by her own letters.

Of these letters, the author of this vindication confesses the importance to be such, that, "if they be genuine, the queen was guilty; and, if they be spurious, she was innocent." He has, therefore, undertaken to prove them spurious, and divided his treatise into six parts.

In the first is contained the history of the letters from their discovery by the earl of Morton, their being produced against queen Mary, and their several appearances in England, before queen Elizabeth and her commissioners, until they were finally delivered back again to the earl of Morton.

The second contains a short abstract of Mr. Goodall's arguments for proving the letters to be spurious and forged; and of Dr. Robertson and

Mr. Hume's objections, by way of answer to Mr. Goodall, with critical observations on these authors.

The third contains an examination of the arguments of Dr. Robertson and Mr. Hume, in support of the authenticity of the letters.

The fourth contains an examination of the confession of Nicholas Hubert, commonly called *French Paris*, with observations, showing the same to be a forgery.

The fifth contains a short recapitulation, or summary, of the arguments on both sides of the question.

The last is an historical collection of the direct or positive evidence still on record, tending to show what part the earls of Murray and Morton, and secretary Lethington, had in the murder of the lord Darnley.

The author apologizes for the length of this book, by observing, that it necessarily comprises a great number of particulars, which could not easily be contracted: the same plea may be made for the imperfection of our extract, which will naturally fall below the force of the book, because we can only select parts of that evidence, which owes its strength to its concatenation, and which will be weakened, whenever it is disjoined.

The account of the seizure of these controverted letters is thus given by the queen's enemies.

"That in the castell of Edinburgh, thair was left be the erle of Bothwell, before his fleeing away, and was send for be ane George Dalgleish, his servand,

who was taken be the erle of Mortoun, ane small gylt coffer, not fully ane fute lang, garnisht in sindrie places with the roman letter F. under ane king's crowne; wharin were certane letteris and writings weel knawin, and be aithis to be affirmit to have been written with the quene of Scottis awn hand to the erle."

The papers in the box were said to be eight letters, in French, some love-sonnets in French also, and a promise of marriage by the queen to Bothwell.

To the reality of these letters our author makes some considerable objections, from the nature of things; but, as such arguments do not always convince, we will pass to the evidence of facts.

On June 15, 1567, the queen delivered herself to Morton, and his party, who imprisoned her.

June 20, 1567, Dalgleish was seized, and, six days after, was examined by Morton; his examination is still extant, and there is no mention of this fatal box.

Dec. 4, 1567, Murray's secret council published an act, in which is the first mention of these letters, and in which they are said to be *written and subscrivit with her awin hand.* Ten days after, Murray's first parliament met, and passed an act, in which they mention *previe letters written halelie* [wholly] *with her awin hand.* The difference between *written and subscribed*, and *wholly written*, gives the author just reason to suspect, first, a forgery, and then a variation of a forgery. It is, indeed, very remarkable, that the first account asserts more than the second, though the second contains all the truth;

for the letters, whether *written* by the queen or not, were not *subscribed*. Had the second account differed from the first only by something added, the first might have contained truth, though not all the truth; but as the second corrects the first by diminution, the first cannot be cleared from falsehood.

In October, 1568, these letters were shown at York to Elizabeth's commissioners, by the agents of Murray, but not in their publick character, as commissioners, but by way of private information, and were not, therefore, exposed to Mary's commissioners. Mary, however, hearing that some letters were intended to be produced against her, directed her commissioners to require them for her inspection, and, in the mean time, to declare them *false and feigned, forged and invented*, observing, that there were many that could counterfeit her hand.

To counterfeit a name is easy, to counterfeit a hand, through eight letters very difficult. But it does not appear that the letters were ever shown to those who would desire to detect them; and, to the English commissioners, a rude and remote imitation might be sufficient, since they were not shown as judicial proofs; and why they were not shown as proofs, no other reason can be given, than they must have then been examined, and that examination would have detected the forgery.

These letters, thus timorously and suspiciously communicated, were all the evidence against Mary; for the servants of Bothwell, executed for the murder of the king, acquitted the queen, at the hour of

death. These letters were so necessary to Murray, that he alleges them, as the reason of the queen's imprisonment, though he imprisoned her on the 16th, and pretended not to have intercepted the letters before the 20th of June.

Of these letters, on which the fate of princes and kingdoms was suspended, the authority should have been put out of doubt; yet that such letters were ever found, there is no witness but Morton who accused the queen, and Crawfurd, a dependent on Lennox, another of her accusers. Dalgleish, the bearer, was hanged without any interrogatories concerning them; and Hulet, mentioned in them, though then in prison, was never called to authenticate them, nor was his confession produced against Mary, till death had left him no power to disown it.

Elizabeth, indeed, was easily satisfied; she declared herself ready to receive the proofs against Mary, and absolutely refused Mary the liberty of confronting her accusers, and making her defence. Before such a judge, a very little proof would be sufficient. She gave the accusers of Mary leave to go to Scotland, and the box and letters were seen no more. They have been since lost, and the discovery, which comparison of writing might have made, is now no longer possible. Hume has, however, endeavoured to palliate the conduct of Elizabeth, but "his account," says our author, "is contradicted, almost in every sentence, by the records, which, it appears, he has himself perused."

In the next part the authenticity of the letters is examined; and it seems to be proved, beyond con-

tradiction, that the French letters, supposed to have been written by Mary, are translated from the Scotch copy, and, if originals, which it was so much the interest of such numbers to preserve, are wanting, it is much more likely that they never existed, than that they have been lost.

The arguments used by Dr. Robertson, to prove the genuineness of the letters, are next examined. Robertson makes use, principally, of what he calls the *internal evidence*, which, amounting, at most, to conjecture, is opposed by conjecture equally probable.

In examining the confession of Nicholas Hubert, or French Paris, this new apologist of Mary seems to gain ground upon her accuser. Paris is mentioned, in the letters, as the bearer of them to Bothwell; when the rest of Bothwell's servants were executed, clearing the queen in the last moment, Paris, instead of suffering his trial, with the rest, at Edinburgh, was conveyed to St. Andrew's, where Murray was absolute; put into a dungeon of Murray's citadel; and, two years after, condemned by Murray himself, nobody knew how. Several months after his death, a confession in his name, without the regular testifications, was sent to Cecil, at what exact time, nobody can tell.

Of this confession, Leslie, bishop of Ross, openly denied the genuineness, in a book printed at London, and suppressed by Elizabeth; and another historian of that time declares, that Paris died without any confession; and the confession itself was never

shown to Mary, or to Mary's commissioners. The author makes this reflection:

"From the violent presumptions that arise from their carrying this poor ignorant stranger from Edinburgh, the ordinary seat of justice; their keeping him hid from all the world, in a remote dungeon, and not producing him, with their other evidences, so as he might have been publickly questioned; the positive and direct testimony of the author of Crawfurd's manuscript, then living, and on the spot at the time; with the publick affirmation of the bishop of Ross, at the time of Paris's death, that he had vindicated the queen with his dying breath; the behaviour of Murray, Morton, Buchanan, and even of Hay, the attester of this pretended confession, on that occasion; their close and reserved silence, at the time when they must have had this confession of Paris in their pocket; and their publishing every other circumstance that could tend to blacken the queen, and yet omitting this confession, the only direct evidence of her supposed guilt; all this duly and dispassionately considered, I think, one may safely conclude, that it was judged not fit to expose, so soon, to light this piece of evidence against the queen; which a cloud of witnesses, living, and present at Paris's execution, would, surely, have given clear testimony against, as a notorious imposture."

Mr. Hume, indeed, observes: "It is in vain, at present, to seek for improbabilities in Nicholas Hubert's dying confession, and to magnify the smallest difficulties into a contradiction. It was certainly a

regular judicial paper, given in regularly and judicially, and ought to have been canvassed at the time, if the persons, whom it concerned, had been assured of their innocence.'' To which our author makes a reply, which cannot be shortened without weakening it:

''Upon what does this author ground his sentence? Upon two very plain reasons, first, that the confession was a judicial one, that is, taken in presence, or by authority of a judge. And secondly, that it was regularly and judicially given in; that must be understood during the time of the conferences before queen Elizabeth and her council, in presence of Mary's commissioners; at which time she ought to have canvassed it,'' says our author, ''if she knew her innocence.

''That it was not a judicial confession, is evident: the paper itself does not bear any such mark; nor does it mention, that it was taken in presence of any person, or by any authority whatsoever; and, by comparing it with the judicial examinations of Dalgleish, Hay, and Hepburn, it is apparent, that it is destitute of every formality, requisite in a judicial evidence. In what dark corner, then, this strange production was generated, our author may endeavour to find out, if he can.

''As to his second assertion, that it was regularly and judicially given in, and, therefore, ought to have been canvassed, by Mary during the conferences; we have already seen, that this, likewise, is not fact: the conferences broke up in February, 1569: Nicholas Hubert was not hanged till August

thereafter, and his dying confession, as Mr. Hume calls it, is only dated the 10th of that month. How, then, can this gentleman gravely tell us, that this confession was judicially given in, and ought to have been, at that very time, canvassed by queen Mary and her commissioners? Such positive assertions, apparently contrary to fact, are unworthy the character of an historian, and may, very justly, render his decision, with respect to evidences of a higher nature, very dubious. In answer, then, to Mr. Hume: As the queen's accusers did not choose to produce this material witness, Paris, whom they had alive and in their hands, nor any declaration or confession, from him, at the critical and proper time for having it canvassed by the queen, I apprehend our author's conclusion may fairly be used against himself; that it is in vain, at present, to support the improbabilities and absurdities in a confession, taken in a clandestine way, nobody knows how, and produced, after Paris's death, by nobody knows whom, and, from every appearance, destitute of every formality, requisite and common to such sort of evidence: for these reasons, I am under no sort of hesitation to give sentence against Nicholas Hubert's confession, as a gross imposture and forgery."

The state of the evidence relating to the letters is this:

Morton affirms, that they were taken in the hands of Dalgleish. The examination of Dalgleish is still extant, and he appears never to have been once interrogated concerning the letters.

Morton and Murray affirm, that they were written

by the queen's hand; they were carefully concealed from Mary and her commissioners, and were never collated by one man, who could desire to disprove them.

Several of the incidents mentioned in the letters are confirmed by the oath of Crawfurd, one of Lennox's defendants, and some of the incidents are so minute, as that they could scarcely be thought on by a forger. Crawfurd's testimony is not without suspicion. Whoever practises forgery, endeavours to make truth the vehicle of falsehood. Of a prince's life very minute incidents are known; and if any are too slight to be remarked, they may be safely feigned, for they are, likewise, too slight to be contradicted. But there are still more reasons for doubting the genuineness of these letters. They had no date of time or place, no seal, no direction, no superscription.

The only evidences that could prove their authenticity were Dalgleish and Paris; of which Dalgleish, at his trial, was never questioned about them; Paris was never publickly tried, though he was kept alive through the time of the conference.

The servants of Bothwell, who were put to death for the king's murder, cleared Mary with their last words.

The letters were first declared to be subscribed, and were then produced without subscription.

They were shown, during the conferences at York, privately, to the English commissioners, but were concealed from the commissioners of Mary.

Mary always solicited the perusal of these letters, and was always denied it.

She demanded to be heard, in person, by Elizabeth, before the nobles of England and the ambassadours of other princes, and was refused.

When Mary persisted in demanding copies of the letters, her commissioners were dismissed with their box to Scotland, and the letters were seen no more.

The French letters, which, for almost two centuries, have been considered as originals, by the enemies of Mary's memory, are now discovered to be forgeries, and acknowledged to be translations, and, perhaps, French translations of a Latin translation. And the modern accusers of Mary are forced to infer, from these letters, which now exist, that other letters existed formerly, which have been lost, in spite of curiosity, malice, and interest.

The rest of this treatise is employed in an endeavour to prove, that Mary's accusers were the murderers of Darnly: through this inquiry it is not necessary to follow him; only let it be observed, that, if these letters were forged by them, they may easily be thought capable of other crimes. That the letters were forged, is now made so probable, that, perhaps, they will never more be cited as testimonies.

MARMOR NORFOLCIENSE

OR, AN ESSAY ON AN ANCIENT PROPHETICAL INSCRIPTION, IN MONKISH RHYME, LATELY DISCOVERED NEAR LYNN, IN NORFOLK. BY PROBUS BRITANNICUS[s]

In Norfolk, near the town of Lynn, in a field, which an ancient tradition of the country affirms to have been once a deep lake, or meer, and which appears, from authentick records, to have been called, about two hundred years ago, *Palus*, or the marsh, was discovered, not long since, a large square stone, which is found, upon an exact inspection, to be a kind of coarse marble of a substance not firm enough to admit of being polished, yet harder than our common quarries afford, and not easily susceptible of injuries from weather or outward accidents.

It was brought to light by a farmer, who, observing his plough obstructed by something, through which the share could not make its way, ordered his servants to remove it. This was not effected without some difficulty, the stone being three feet four inches deep, and four feet square in the superficies; and, consequently, of a weight not easily manageable. However, by the application of levers, it was, at length, raised, and conveyed to a corner of the field, where it lay, for some months, entirely unregarded; nor, perhaps, had we ever been made acquainted with this venerable relick of antiquity, had not our good fortune been greater than our curiosity.

A gentleman, well known to the learned world, and distinguished by the patronage of the Mæcenas of Norfolk, whose name, was I permitted to men-

[s] First printed in the year 1739.

tion it, would excite the attention of my reader, and add no small authority to my conjectures, observing, as he was walking that way, that the clouds began to gather, and threaten him with a shower, had recourse, for shelter, to the trees under which this stone happened to lie, and sat down upon it, in expectation of fair weather. At length he began to amuse himself, in his confinement, by clearing the earth from his seat with the point of his cane; and had continued this employment some time, when he observed several traces of letters, antique and irregular, which, by being very deeply engraven, were still easily distinguishable.

This discovery so far raised his curiosity, that, going home immediately, he procured an instrument proper for cutting out the clay, that filled up the spaces of the letters; and, with very little labour, made the inscription legible, which is here exhibited to the publick:

POST-GENITIS
Cum lapidem hunc, magni
Qui nunc jacet incola stagni,
Vel pede equus tanget,
Vel arator vomere franget,
Sentiet ægra metus,
Effundet patria fletus,
Littoraque ut fluctu,
Resonabunt oppida luctu:
Nam fœcunda rubri
Serpent per prata colubri,
Gramina vastantes,
Flores fructusque vorantes,
Omnia fœdantes,
Vitiantes, et spoliantes;
Quanquam haud pugnaces,
Ibunt per cuncta minaces,

Fures absque timore,
Et pingues absque labore.
Horrida dementes
Rapiet discordia gentes;
Plurima tunc leges
Mutabit, plurima reges
Natio; conversa
In rabiem tunc contremet ursa
Cynthia, tunc latis
Florebunt lilia pratis;
Nec fremere audebit
Leo, sed violare timebit,
Omnia consuetus
Populari pascua lætus.
Ante oculos natus
Calceatos et cruciatos
Jam feret ignavus,
Vetitaque libidine pravus.
En quoque quod mirum,
Quod dicas denique dirum,
Sanguinem equus sugit,
Neque bellua victa remugit!

These lines he carefully copied, accompanied, in his letter of July 19, with the following translation.

TO POSTERITY

Whene'er this stone, now hid beneath the lake,
The horse shall trample, or the plough shall break,
Then, O my country! shalt thou groan distrest,
Grief swell thine eyes, and terrour chill thy breast.
Thy streets with violence of woe shall sound,
Loud as the billows bursting on the ground.
Then through thy fields shall scarlet reptiles stray,
And rapine and pollution mark their way.
Their hungry swarms the peaceful vale shall fright,
Still fierce to threaten, still afraid to fight;
The teeming year's whole product shall devour,
Insatiate pluck the fruit, and crop the flow'r;
Shall glutton on the industrious peasants' spoil,
Rob without fear, and fatten without toil;
Then o'er the world shall discord stretch her wings;
Kings change their laws, and kingdoms change their kings.
The bear, enrag'd, th' affrighted moon shall dread;
The lilies o'er the vales triumphant spread;

Nor shall the lion, wont of old to reign
Despotick o'er the desolated plain,
Henceforth th' inviolable bloom invade,
Or dare to murmur in the flow'ry glade;
His tortur'd sons shall die before his face,
While he lies melting in a lewd embrace;
And, yet more strange! his veins a horse shall drain,
Nor shall the passive coward once complain.

I make not the least doubt, but that this learned person has given us, as an antiquary, a true and uncontrovertible representation of the writer's meaning; and, am sure, he can confirm it by innumerable quotations from the authors of the middle age, should he be publickly called upon by any man of eminent rank in the republick of letters; nor will he deny the world the satisfaction, provided the animadverter proceeds with that sobriety and modesty, with which it becomes every learned man to treat a subject of such importance.

Yet, with all proper deference to a name so justly celebrated, I will take the freedom of observing, that he has succeeded better as a scholar than a poet; having fallen below the strength, the conciseness, and, at the same time, below the perspicuity of his author. I shall not point out the particular passages in which this disparity is remarkable, but content myself with saying, in general, that the criticisms, which there is room for on this translation, may be almost an incitement to some lawyer, studious of antiquity, to learn Latin.

The inscription, which I now proceed to consider, wants no arguments to prove its antiquity to those among the learned, who are versed in the writers of the darker ages, and know that the Latin poetry of

those times was of a peculiar cast and air, not easy to be understood, and very difficult to be imitated; nor can it be conceived, that any man would lay out his abilities on a way of writing, which, though attained with much study, could gain him no reputation; and engrave his chimeras on a stone, to astonish posterity.

Its antiquity, therefore, is out of dispute; but how high a degree of antiquity is to be assigned it, there is more ground for inquiry than determination. How early Latin rhymes made their appearance in the world, is yet undecided by the criticks. Verses of this kind were called leonine; but whence they derived that appellation, the learned Camden[t] confesses himself ignorant; so that the style carries no certain marks of its age. I shall only observe farther, on this head, that the characters are nearly of the same form with those on king Arthur's coffin; but whether, from their similitude, we may venture to pronounce them of the same date, I must refer to the decision of better judges.

Our inability to fix the age of this inscription, necessarily infers our ignorance of its author, with relation to whom, many controversies may be started, worthy of the most profound learning, and most indefatigable diligence.

The first question that naturally arises is: Whether he was a Briton or a Saxon? I had, at first, con-

[t] See his Remains, 1614, p. 337, "Riming verses, which are called *versus leonini*, I know not wherefore, (for a lyon's taile doth not answer to the middle parts as these verses doe,) began in the time of Carolus Magnus, and were only in request then, and in many ages following, which delighted in nothing more than in this minstrelsie of meeters."

ceived some hope that, in this question, in which not only the idle curiosity of virtuosos, but the honour of two mighty nations is concerned, some information might be drawn from the word *patria*, my country, in the third line; England being not, in propriety of speech, the country of the Saxons; at least, not at their first arrival. But, upon farther reflection, this argument appeared not conclusive, since we find that, in all ages, foreigners have affected to call England their country, even when, like the Saxons of old, they came only to plunder it.

An argument in favour of the Britons may, indeed, be drawn from the tenderness, with which the author seems to lament his country, and the compassion he shows for its approaching calamities. I, who am a descendant from the Saxons, and, therefore, unwilling to say any thing derogatory from the reputation of my forefathers, must yet allow this argument its full force; for it has been rarely, very rarely, known, that foreigners, however well treated, caressed, enriched, flattered, or exalted, have regarded this country with the least gratitude or affection, till the race has, by long continuance, after many generations, been naturalized and assimilated.

They have been ready, upon all occasions, to prefer the petty interests of their own country, though, perhaps, only some desolate and worthless corner of the world. They have employed the wealth of England, in paying troops to defend mud-wall towns, and uninhabitable rocks, and in purchasing barriers for territories, of which the natural sterility secured them from invasion.

This argument, which wants no particular instances to confirm it, is, I confess, of the greatest weight in this question, and inclines me strongly to believe, that the benevolent author of this prediction must have been born a Briton.

The learned discoverer of the inscription was pleased to insist, with great warmth, upon the etymology of the word *patria*, which signifying, says he, *the land of my father*, could be made use of by none, but such whose ancestors had resided here; but, in answer to this demonstration, as he called it, I only desired him to take notice, how common it is for intruders of yesterday to pretend the same title with the ancient proprietors, and, having just received an estate, by voluntary grant, to erect a claim of *hereditary right*.

Nor is it less difficult to form any satisfactory conjecture, concerning the rank or condition of the writer, who, contented with a consciousness of having done his duty, in leaving this solemn warning to his country, seems studiously to have avoided that veneration, to which his knowledge of futurity, undoubtedly, entitled him, and those honours, which his memory might justly claim from the gratitude of posterity; and has, therefore, left no trace, by which the most sagacious and diligent inquirer can hope to discover him.

This conduct, alone, ought to convince us, that the prediction is of no small importance to mankind, since the author of it appears not to have been influenced by any other motive, than that noble

and exalted philanthropy, which is above the narrow views of recompense or applause.

That interest had no share in this inscription, is evident beyond dispute, since the age in which he lived received neither pleasure nor instruction from it. Nor is it less apparent, from the suppression of his name, that he was equally a stranger to that wild desire of fame, which has, sometimes, infatuated the noblest minds.

His modesty, however, has not been able wholly to extinguish that curiosity, which so naturally leads us, when we admire a performance, to inquire after the author. Those, whom I have consulted on this occasion; and my zeal for the honour of this benefactor of my country has not suffered me to forget a single antiquary of reputation, have, almost unanimously, determined, that it was written by a king. For where else, said they, are we to expect that greatness of mind, and that dignity of expression, so eminently conspicuous in this inscription!

It is with a proper sense of the weakness of my own abilities, that I venture to lay before the publick the reasons which hinder me from concurring with this opinion, which I am not only inclined to favour by my respect for the authors of it, but by a natural affection for monarchy, and a prevailing inclination to believe, that every excellence is inherent in a king.

To condemn an opinion so agreeable to the reverence due to the regal dignity, and countenanced by so great authorities, without a long and accurate discussion, would be a temerity justly liable to the

severest censures. A supercilious and arrogant determination of a controversy of such importance, would, doubtless, be treated by the impartial and candid with the utmost indignation.

But as I have too high an idea of the learning of my contemporaries, to obtrude any crude, hasty, or indigested notions on the publick, I have proceeded with the utmost degree of diffidence and caution; I have frequently reviewed all my arguments, traced them backwards to their first principles, and used every method of examination to discover, whether all the deductions were natural and just, and whether I was not imposed on by some specious fallacy; but the farther I carried my inquiries, and the longer I dwelt upon this great point, the more was I convinced, in spite of all my prejudices, that this wonderful prediction was not written by a king.

For, after a laborious and attentive perusal of histories, memoirs, chronicles, lives, characters, vindications, panegyricks and epitaphs, I could find no sufficient authority for ascribing to any of our English monarchs, however gracious or glorious, any prophetical knowledge or prescience of futurity; which, when we consider how rarely regal virtues are forgotten, how soon they are discovered, and how loudly they are celebrated, affords a probable argument, at least, that none of them have laid any claim to this character. For why should historians have omitted to embellish their accounts with such a striking circumstance? or, if the histories of that age are lost, by length of time, why was not so uncommon an excellence transmitted to posterity, in

the more lasting colours of poetry ? Was that unhappy age without a laureate ? Was there no Young[u] or Philips[v], no Ward[w] or Mitchell[x], to snatch such wonders from oblivion, and immortalize a prince of such capacities ? If this was really the case, let us congratulate ourselves upon being reserved for better days; days so fruitful of happy writers, that no princely virtue can shine in vain. Our monarchs are surrounded with refined spirits, so penetrating, that they frequently discover, in their masters, great qualities, invisible to vulgar eyes, and which, did not they publish them to mankind, would be unobserved for ever.

Nor is it easy to find, in the lives of our monarchs, many instances of that regard for posterity, which seems to have been the prevailing temper of this venerable man. I have seldom, in any of the gracious speeches delivered from the throne, and received, with the highest gratitude and satisfaction, by both houses of parliament, discovered any other concern than for the current year, for which supplies are generally demanded in very pressing terms, and, sometimes, such as imply no remarkable solicitude for posterity.

Nothing, indeed, can be more unreasonable and absurd, than to require, that a monarch, distracted with cares and surrounded with enemies, should involve himself in superfluous anxieties, by an unnecessary concern about future generations. Are not

[u] Dr. Edward Young.

[v] Ambrose Philips, author of the Distrest Mother, &c.

[w] Edward Ward. See Dunciad. and Biographia Dramatica.

[x] Joseph Mitchell. See Biographia Dramatica.

pretenders, mock-patriots, masquerades, operas, birthnights, treaties, conventions, reviews, drawing-rooms, the births of heirs, and the deaths of queens, sufficient to overwhelm any capacity but that of a king? Surely, he that acquits himself successfully of such affairs may content himself with the glory he acquires, and leave posterity to his successours.

That this has been the conduct of most princes, is evident from the accounts of all ages and nations; and, therefore, I hope it will not be thought that I have, without just reasons, deprived this inscription of the veneration it might demand, as the work of a king.

With what laborious struggles against prejudice and inclination, with what efforts of reasoning, and pertinacity of self-denial, I have prevailed upon myself to sacrifice the honour of this monument to the love of truth, none, who are unacquainted with the fondness of a commentator, will be able to conceive. But this instance will be, I hope, sufficient to convince the publick, that I write with sincerity, and that, whatever my success may be, my intentions are good.

Where we are to look for our author, it still remains to be considered; whether in the high road of publick employments, or the by-paths of private life.

It has always been observed of those that frequent a court, that they soon, by a kind of contagion, catch the regal spirit of neglecting futurity. The minister forms an expedient to suspend, or perplex, an inquiry into his measures, for a few months,

and applauds and triumphs in his own dexterity. The peer puts off his creditor for the present day, and forgets that he is ever to see him more. The frown of a prince, and the loss of a pension, have, indeed, been found of wonderful efficacy to abstract men's thoughts from the present time, and fill them with zeal for the liberty and welfare of ages to come. But, I am inclined to think more favourably of the author of this prediction, than that he was made a patriot by disappointment or disgust. If he ever saw a court, I would willingly believe, that he did not owe his concern for posterity to his ill reception there, but his ill reception there to his concern for posterity.

However, since truth is the same in the mouth of a hermit, or a prince, since it is not reason, but weakness, that makes us rate counsel by our esteem for the counsellor, let us, at length, desist from this inquiry, so useless in itself, in which we have room to hope for so little satisfaction. Let us show our gratitude to the author, by answering his intentions, by considering minutely the lines which he has left us, and examining their import without heat, precipitancy, or party-prejudices; let us endeavour to keep the just mean, between searching, ambitiously, for far-fetched interpretations, and admitting such low meaning, and obvious and low sense, as is inconsistent with those great and extensive views, which it is reasonable to ascribe to this excellent man.

It may be yet further asked, whether this inscription, which appears in the stone, be an original, and

not rather a version of a traditional prediction, in the old British tongue, which the zeal of some learned man prompted him to translate and engrave, in a more known language, for the instruction of future ages: but, as the lines carry, at the first view, a reference both to the stone itself, and, very remarkably, to the place where it was found, I cannot see any foundation for such a suspicion.

It remains, now, that we examine the sense and import of the inscription, which, after having long dwelt upon it, with the closest and most laborious attention, I must confess myself not yet able fully to comprehend. The following explications, therefore, are, by no means, laid down as certain and indubitable truths, but as conjectures not always wholly satisfactory, even to myself, and which I had not dared to propose to so enlightened an age, an age which abounds with those great ornaments of human nature, skepticks, antimoralists, and infidels, but with hopes that they would excite some person of greater abilities, to penetrate further into the oraculous obscurity of this wonderful prediction.

Not even the four first lines are without their difficulties, in which the time of the discovery of the stone seems to be the time assigned for the events foretold by it:

"Cum lapidem hunc, magni
Qui nunc jacet incola stagni,
Vel pede equus tanget,
Vel arator vomere franget,
Sentiet ægra metus,
Effundet patria fletus,
Littoraque ut fluctu,
Resonabunt oppida luctu."

"Whene'er this stone, now hid beneath the lake,
The horse shall trample, or the plough shall break,
Then, O my country, shalt thou groan distrest,
Grief in thine eyes, and terrour in thy breast.
Thy streets with violence of woe shall sound,
Loud as the billows bursting on the ground."

"When this stone," says he, "which now lies hid beneath the waters of a deep lake, shall be struck upon by the horse, or broken by the plough, then shalt thou, my country, be astonished with terrours, and drowned in tears; then shall thy towns sound with lamentations, as thy shores with the roarings of the waves." These are the words literally rendered, but how are they verified! The lake is dry, the stone is turned up, but there is no appearance of this dismal scene. Is not all, at home, satisfaction and tranquillity? all, abroad, submission and compliance? Is it the interest, or inclination, of any prince, or state, to draw a sword against us? and are we not, nevertheless, secured by a numerous standing army, and a king who is, himself, an army? Have our troops any other employment than to march to a review? Have our fleets encountered any thing but winds and worms? To me the present state of the nation seems so far from any resemblance to the noise and agitation of a tempestuous sea, that it may be much more properly compared to the dead stillness of the waves before a storm.

"Nam fœcunda rubri
Serpent per prata colubri,
Gramina vastantes,
Flores fructusque vorantes,
Omnia fœdantes,
Vitiantes, et spoliantes;
Quanquam haud pugnaces,
Ibunt per cuncta minaces,

Fures absque timore,
Et pingues absque labore."

"Then through thy fields shall scarlet reptiles stray,
And rapine and pollution mark their way;
Their hungry swarms the peaceful vale shall fright,
Still fierce to threaten, still afraid to fight;
The teeming year's whole product shall devour,
Insatiate pluck the fruit, and crop the flow'r;
Shall glutton on the industrious peasants' spoil,
Rob without fear, and fatten without toil."

He seems, in these verses, to descend to a particular account of this dreadful calamity; but his description is capable of very different senses, with almost equal probability:

"Red serpents," says he, (*rubri colubri* are the Latin words, which the poetical translator has rendered *scarlet reptiles*, using a general term for a particular, in my opinion, too licentiously,) "Red serpents shall wander o'er her meadows, and pillage, and pollute," &c. The particular mention of the colour of this destructive viper may be some guide to us in this labyrinth, through which, I must acknowledge, I cannot yet have any certain path. I confess, that, when a few days after my perusal of this passage, I heard of the multitude of lady-birds seen in Kent, I began to imagine that these were the fatal insects, by which the island was to be laid waste, and, therefore, looked over all accounts of them with uncommon concern. But, when my first terrours began to subside, I soon recollected that these creatures, having both wings and feet, would scarcely have been called serpents; and was quickly convinced, by their leaving the country, without

doing any hurt, that they had no quality, but the colour, in common with the ravagers here described.

As I am not able to determine any thing on this question, I shall content myself with collecting, into one view, the several properties of this pestiferous brood, with which we are threatened, as hints to more sagacious and fortunate readers, who, when they shall find any red animal, that ranges uncontrouled over the country, and devours the labours of the trader and the husbandman; that carries with it corruption, rapine, pollution, and devastation; that threatens without courage, robs without fear, and is pampered without labour, they may know that the prediction is completed. Let me only remark further, that if the style of this, as of all other predictions, is figurative, the serpent, a wretched animal that crawls upon the earth, is a proper emblem of low views, self-interest, and base submission, as well as of cruelty, mischief, and malevolence.

I cannot forbear to observe, in this place, that, as it is of no advantage to mankind to be forewarned of inevitable and insurmountable misfortunes, the author, probably, intended to hint to his countrymen the proper remedies for the evils he describes. In this calamity, on which he dwells longest, and which he seems to deplore with the deepest sorrow, he points out one circumstance, which may be of great use to disperse our apprehensions, and awaken us from that panick which the reader must necessarily feel, at the first transient view of this dreadful description. These serpents, says the original, are "haud pugnaces,"

of no fighting race; they will threaten, indeed, and hiss, and terrify the weak, and timorous, and thoughtless, but have no real courage or strength. So that the mischief done by them, their ravages, devastations, and robberies, must be only the consequences of cowardice in the sufferers, who are harassed and oppressed, only because they suffer it without resistance. We are, therefore, to remember, whenever the pest, here threatened, shall invade us, that submission and tameness will be certain ruin, and that nothing but spirit, vigilance, activity, and opposition, can preserve us from the most hateful and reproachful misery, that of being plundered, starved, and devoured by vermin and by reptiles.

"Horrida dementes
Rapiet discordia gentes;
Plurima tunc leges
Mutabit, plurima reges
Natio."

"Then o'er the world shall discord stretch her wings,
Kings change their laws, and kingdoms change their kings."

Here the author takes a general survey of the state of the world, and the changes that were to happen, about the time of the discovery of this monument, in many nations. As it is not likely that he intended to touch upon the affairs of other countries, any farther than the advantage of his own made it necessary, we may reasonably conjecture, that he had a full and distinct view of all the negotiations, treaties, confederacies, of all the triple and quadruple alliances, and all the leagues offensive and defensive, in which we were to be engaged, either as principals, accessaries, or guarantees,

whether by policy, or hope, or fear, or our concern for preserving the balance of power, or our tenderness for the liberties of Europe. He knew that our negotiators would interest us in the affairs of the whole earth, and that no state could either rise or decline in power, either extend or lose its dominions, without affecting politicks, and influencing our councils.

This passage will bear an easy and natural application to the present time, in which so many revolutions have happened, so many nations have changed their masters, and so many disputes and commotions are embroiling, almost in every part of the world.

That almost every state in Europe and Asia, that is, almost every country, then known, is comprehended in this prediction, may be easily conceived, but whether it extends to regions at that time undiscovered, and portends any alteration of government in Carolina and Georgia, let more able or more daring expositors determine:

> ————"Conversa
> In rabiem tunc contremet ursa
> Cynthia."
>
> "The bear, enrag'd, th' affrighted moon shall dread."

The terrour created to the moon by the anger of the bear, is a strange expression, but may, perhaps, relate to the apprehensions raised in the Turkish empire, of which a crescent, or new moon, is the imperial standard, by the increasing power of the emperess of Russia, whose dominions lie under the northern constellation, called the Bear.

——"Tunca latis
Florebunt lilia pratis."

"The lilies o'er the vales triumphant spread."

The lilies borne by the kings of France are an apt representation of that country; and their flourishing over wide-extended valleys, seems to regard the new increase of the French power, wealth, and dominions by the advancement of their trade, and the accession of Lorrain. This is, at first view, an obvious, but, perhaps, for that very reason not the true sense of the inscription. How can we reconcile it with the following passage:

"Nec fremere audebit
Leo, sed violare timebit,
Omnia consuetus
Populari pascua lætus."

"Nor shall the lion, wont of old to reign
Despotick o'er the desolated plain,
Henceforth, th' inviolable bloom invade,
Or dare to murmur in the flow'ry glade."

in which the lion that used, at pleasure, to lay the pastures waste, is represented, as not daring to touch the lilies, or murmur at their growth! The lion, it is true, is one of the supporters of the arms of England, and may, therefore, figure our countrymen, who have, in ancient times, made France a desert. But can it be said, that the lion dares not murmur or rage, (for *fremere* may import both,) when it is evident, that, for many years, this whole kingdom has murmured, however, it may be, at present, calm and secure, by its confidence in the wisdom of our politicians, and the address of our negotiators:

"Ante oculos natos
Calceatos et cruciatos
Jam feret ignavus,
Vetitaque libidine pravus."

"His tortur'd sons shall die before his face,
While he lies melting in a lewd embrace."

Here are other things mentioned of the lion, equally unintelligible, if we suppose them to be spoken of our nation, as that he lies sluggish, and depraved with unlawful lusts, while his offspring is trampled and tortured before his eyes. But in what place can the English be said to be trampled or tortured? Where are they treated with injustice or contempt? What nation is there, from pole to pole, that does not reverence the nod of the British king? Is not our commerce unrestrained? Are not the riches of the world our own? Do not our ships sail unmolested, and our merchants traffick in perfect security? Is not the very name of England treated by foreigners in a manner never known before? Or if some slight injuries have been offered; if some of our petty traders have been stopped, our possessions threatened; our effects confiscated; our flag insulted; or our ears cropped, have we lain sluggish and unactive? Have not our fleets been seen in triumph at Spithead? Did not Hosier visit the Bastimentos, and is not Haddock now stationed at Port Mahon?

"En quoque quod mirum,
Quod dicas denique dirum,
Sanguinem equus sugit,
Neque bellua victa remugit!"

"And yet more strange! his veins a horse shall drain,
Nor shall the passive coward once complain!"

It is farther asserted, in the concluding lines, that the horse shall suck the lion's blood. This is still more obscure than any of the rest; and, indeed, the difficulties I have met with, ever since the first

mention of the lion, are so many and great, that I had, in utter despair of surmounting them, once desisted from my design of publishing any thing upon this subject; but was prevailed upon by the importunity of some friends, to whom I can deny nothing, to resume my design; and I must own, that nothing animated me so much as the hope, they flattered me with, that my essay might be inserted in the Gazetteer, and, so, become of service to my country.

That a weaker animal should suck the blood of a stronger, without resistance, is wholly improbable, and inconsistent with the regard for self-preservation, so observable in every order and species of beings. We must, therefore, necessarily endeavour after some figurative sense, not liable to so insuperable an objection.

Were I to proceed in the same tenour of interpretation, by which I explained the moon and the lilies, I might observe, that a horse is the arms of H———. But how, then, does the horse suck the lion's blood! Money is the blood of the body politick.—— But my zeal for the present happy establishment will not suffer me to pursue a train of thought, that leads to such shocking conclusions. The idea is detestable, and such as, it ought to be hoped, can enter into the mind of none but a virulent republican, or bloody jacobite. There is not one honest man in the nation unconvinced, how weak an attempt it would be to endeavour to confute this insinuation; an insinuation which no party will dare to abet, and of so fatal and destructive a

tendency, that it may prove equally dangerous to the author, whether true or false.

As, therefore, I can form no hypothesis, on which a consistent interpretation may be built, I must leave these loose and unconnected hints entirely to the candour of the reader, and confess, that I do not think my scheme of explication just, since I cannot apply it, throughout the whole, without involving myself in difficulties, from which the ablest interpreter would find it no easy matter to get free.

Being, therefore, convinced, upon an attentive and deliberate review of these observations, and a consultation with my friends, of whose abilities I have the highest esteem, and whose impartiality, sincerity, and probity, I have long known, and frequently experienced, that my conjectures are, in general, very uncertain, often improbable, and, sometimes, little less than apparently false, I was long in doubt, whether I ought not entirely to suppress them, and content myself with publishing in the Gazetteer the inscription, as it stands engraven on the stone, without translation or commentary, unless that ingenious and learned society should favour the world with their own remarks.

To this scheme, which I thought extremely well calculated for the publick good, and, therefore, very eagerly communicated to my acquaintance and fellow-students, some objections were started, which, as I had not foreseen, I was unable to answer.

It was observed, first, that the daily dissertations, published by that fraternity, are written with such

profundity of sentiment, and filled with such uncommon modes of expression, as to be themselves sufficiently unintelligible to vulgar readers; and that, therefore, the venerable obscurity of this prediction, would much less excite the curiosity, and awaken the attention of mankind, than if it were exhibited in any other paper, and placed in opposition to the clear and easy style of an author generally understood.

To this argument, formidable as it was, I answered, after a short pause, that, with all proper deference to the great sagacity and advanced age of the objector, I could not but conceive, that his position confuted itself, and that a reader of the Gazetteer, being, by his own confession, accustomed to encounter difficulties, and search for meaning, where it was not easily to be found, must be better prepared, than any other man, for the perusal of these ambiguous expressions; and that, besides, the explication of this stone, being a task which nothing could surmount but the most acute penetration, joined with indefatigable patience, seemed, in reality, reserved for those who have given proofs of both, in the highest degree, by reading and understanding the Gazetteer.

This answer satisfied every one but the objector, who, with an obstinacy not very uncommon, adhered to his own opinion, though he could not defend it; and, not being able to make any reply, attempted to laugh away my argument, but found the rest of my friends so little disposed to jest upon this important question, that he was forced to re-

strain his mirth, and content himself with a sullen and contemptuous silence.

Another of my friends, whom I had assembled on this occasion, having owned the solidity of my answer to the first objection, offered a second, which, in his opinion, could not be so easily defeated.

"I have observed," says he, "that the essays in the Gazetteer, though written on very important subjects, by the ablest hands which ambition can incite, friendship engage, or money procure, have never, though circulated through the kingdom with the utmost application, had any remarkable influence upon the people. I know many persons, of no common capacity, that hold it sufficient to peruse these papers four times a year; and others, who receive them regularly, and, without looking upon them, treasure them under ground for the benefit of posterity. So that the inscription may, by being inserted there, sink, once more, into darkness and oblivion, instead of informing the age, and assisting our present ministry in the regulation of their measures."

Another observed, that nothing was more unreasonable than my hope, that any remarks or elucidations would be drawn up by that fraternity, since their own employments do not allow them any leisure for such attempts. Every one knows that panegyrick is, in its own nature, no easy task, and that to defend is much more difficult than to attack; consider, then, says he, what industry, what assiduity it must require, to praise and vindicate a ministry like ours.

It was hinted, by another, that an inscription,

which had no relation to any particular set of men amongst us, but was composed many ages before the parties, which now divide the nation, had a being, could not be so properly conveyed to the world, by means of a paper dedicated to political debates.

Another, to whom I had communicated my own observations, in a more private manner, and who had inserted some of his own arguments, declared it, as his opinion, that they were, though very controvertible and unsatisfactory, yet too valuable to be lost; and that though to insert the inscription in a paper, of which such numbers are daily distributed at the expense of the publick, would, doubtless, be very agreeable to the generous design of the author; yet he hoped, that as all the students, either of politicks or antiquities, would receive both pleasure and improvement from the dissertation with which it is accompanied, none of them would regret to pay for so agreeable an entertainment.

It cannot be wondered, that I have yielded, at last, to such weighty reasons, and such insinuating compliments, and chosen to gratify, at once, the inclinations of friends, and the vanity of an author. Yet, I should think, I had very imperfectly discharged my duty to my country, did I not warn all, whom either interest or curiosity shall incite to the perusal of this treatise, not to lay any stress upon my explications.

How a more complete and indisputable interpretation may be obtained, it is not easy to say. This will, I suppose, be readily granted, that it is not to

be expected from any single hand, but from the joint inquiries, and united labours, of a numerous society of able men, instituted by authority, selected with great discernment and impartiality, and supported at the charge of the nation.

I am very far from apprehending, that any proposal for the attainment of so desirable an end, will be rejected by this inquisitive and enlightened age, and shall, therefore, lay before the publick the project which I have formed, and matured by long consideration, for the institution of a society of commentators upon this inscription.

I humbly propose, that thirty of the most distinguished genius be chosen for this employment, half from the inns of court, and half from the army, and be incorporated into a society for five years, under the name of the Society of Commentators.

That great undertakings can only be executed by a great number of hands, is too evident to require any proof; and, I am afraid, all that read this scheme will think, that it is chiefly defective in this respect, and that when they reflect how many commissaries were thought necessary at Seville, and that even their negotiations entirely miscarried, probably for want of more associates, they will conclude, that I have proposed impossibilities, and that the ends of the institution will be defeated by an injudicious and ill timed frugality.

But if it be considered, how well the persons, I recommend, must have been qualified, by their education and profession, for the provinces assigned them, the objection will grow less weighty than it

appears. It is well known to be the constant study of the lawyers to discover, in acts of parliament, meanings which escaped the committees that drew them up, and the senates that passed them into laws, and to explain wills, into a sense wholly contrary to the intention of the testator. How easily may an adept in these admirable and useful arts, penetrate into the most hidden import of this prediction ? A man, accustomed to satisfy himself with the obvious and natural meaning of a sentence, does not easily shake off his habit; but a true-bred lawyer never contents himself with one sense, when there is another to be found.

Nor will the beneficial consequences of this scheme terminate in the explication of this monument: they will extend much further; for the commentators, having sharpened and improved their sagacity by this long and difficult course of study, will, when they return into publick life, be of wonderful service to the government, in examining pamphlets, songs, and journals, and in drawing up informations, indictments, and instructions for special juries. They will be wonderfully fitted for the posts of attorney and solicitor general, but will excel, above all, as licensers for the stage.

The gentlemen of the army will equally adorn the province to which I have assigned them, of setting the discoveries and sentiments of their associates in a clear and agreeable light. The lawyers are well known not to be very happy in expressing their ideas, being, for the most part, able to make themselves understood by none but their own fraternity.

But the geniuses of the army have sufficient opportunities, by their free access to the levee and the toilet, their constant attendance on balls and assemblies, and that abundant leisure which they enjoy, beyond any other body of men, to acquaint themselves with every new word, and prevailing mode of expression, and to attain the utmost nicety, and most polished prettiness of language.

It will be necessary, that, during their attendance upon the society, they be exempt from any obligation to appear on Hyde park; and that upon no emergency, however pressing, they be called away from their studies, unless the nation be in immediate danger, by an insurrection of weavers, colliers, or smugglers.

There may not, perhaps, be found in the army such a number of men, who have ever condescended to pass through the labours, and irksome forms of education in use, among the lower classes of people, or submitted to learn the mercantile and plebeian arts of writing and reading. I must own, that though I entirely agree with the notions of the usefulness of any such trivial accomplishments in the military profession, and of their inconsistency with more valuable attainments; though I am convinced, that a man who can read and write becomes, at least, a very disagreeable companion to his brother soldiers, if he does not absolutely shun their acquaintance; that he is apt to imbibe, from his books, odd notions of liberty and independency, and even, sometimes, of morality and virtue, utterly inconsistent with the desirable character of a pretty gentleman; though

writing frequently stains the whitest finger, and reading has a natural tendency to cloud the aspect, and depress that airy and thoughtless vivacity, which is the distinguishing characteristick of a modern warriour; yet, on this single occasion, I cannot but heartily wish, that, by a strict search, there may be discovered, in the army, fifteen men who can write and read.

I know that the knowledge of the alphabet is so disreputable among these gentlemen, that those who have, by ill fortune, formerly been taught it, have partly forgot it by disuse, and partly concealed it from the world, to avoid the railleries and insults to which their education might make them liable: I propose, therefore, that all the officers of the army may be examined upon oath, one by one, and that if fifteen cannot be selected, who are, at present, so qualified, the deficiency may be supplied out of those who, having once learned to read, may, perhaps, with the assistance of a master, in a short time, refresh their memories.

It may be thought, at the first sight of this proposal, that it might not be improper to assign, to every commentator, a reader and secretary; but, it may be easily conceived, that not only the publick might murmur at such an addition of expense, but that, by the unfaithfulness or negligence of their servants, the discoveries of the society may be carried to foreign courts, and made use of to the disadvantage of our own country.

For the residence of this society, I cannot think any place more proper than Greenwich hospital, in

which they may have thirty apartments fitted up for them, that they may make their observations in private, and meet, once a day, in the painted hall to compare them.

If the establishment of this society be thought a matter of too much importance to be deferred till the new buildings are finished, it will be necessary to make room for their reception, by the expulsion of such of the seamen as have no pretensions to the settlement there, but fractured limbs, loss of eyes, or decayed constitutions, who have lately been admitted in such numbers, that it is now scarce possible to accommodate a nobleman's groom, footman, or postilion, in a manner suitable to the dignity of his profession, and the original design of the foundation.

The situation of Greenwich will naturally dispose them to reflection and study: and particular caution ought to be used, lest any interruption be suffered to dissipate their attention, or distract their meditations: for this reason, all visits and letters from ladies are strictly to be prohibited; and if any of the members shall be detected with a lapdog, pack of cards, box of dice, draught-table, snuff-box, or looking-glass, he shall, for the first offence, be confined for three months to water gruel, and, for the second, be expelled the society.

Nothing now remains, but that an estimate be made of the expenses necessary for carrying on this noble and generous design. The salary to be allowed each professor cannot be less than 2,000*l.* a year, which is, indeed, more than the regular stipend of a commissioner of excise; but, it must be remem-

bered, that the commentators have a much more difficult and important employment, and can expect their salaries but for the short space of five years; whereas a commissioner (unless he imprudently suffers himself to be carried away by a whimsical tenderness for his country) has an establishment for life.

It will be necessary to allow the society, in general, 30,000*l.* yearly, for the support of the publick table, and 40,000*l.* for secret service.

Thus will the ministry have a fair prospect of obtaining the full sense and import of the prediction, without burdening the publick with more than 650,000*l.* which may be paid out of the sinking fund; or, if it be not thought proper to violate that sacred treasure, by converting any part of it to uses not primarily intended, may be easily raised by a general poll-tax, or excise upon bread.

Having now completed my scheme, a scheme calculated for the publick benefit, without regard to any party, I entreat all sects, factions, and distinctions of men among us, to lay aside, for a time, their party-feuds and petty animosities; and, by a warm concurrence on this urgent occasion, teach posterity to sacrifice every private interest to the advantage of their country.

[In this performance, which was first printed in the year 1739, Dr. Johnson, "in a feigned inscription, supposed to have been found in Norfolk, the country of sir Robert Walpole, then the obnoxious prime minister of this country, inveighs against the Brunswick succession, and the measures of government consequent upon it. To this supposed prophecy, he added a commentory, making each expression apply to the times, with warm anti-Hanoverian zeal."— Boswell's Life, i.]

OBSERVATIONS OF AFFAIRS IN 1756[y]

The time is now come, in which every Englishman expects to be informed of the national affairs, and in which he has a right to have that expectation gratified. For whatever may be urged by ministers, or those whom vanity or interest make the followers of ministers, concerning the necessity of confidence in our governours, and the presumption of prying, with profane eyes, into the recesses of policy, it is evident, that this reverence can be claimed only by counsels yet unexecuted, and projects suspended in deliberation. But when a design has ended in miscarriage or success, when every eye, and every ear, is witness to general discontent, or general satisfaction, it is then a proper time to disentangle confusion, and illustrate obscurity; to show by what causes every event was produced, and in what effects it is likely to terminate; to lay down, with distinct particularity, what rumour always huddles in general exclamations, or perplexes by undigested narratives; to show whence happiness or calamity is derived, and whence it may be expected; and honestly to lay before the people, what inquiry can gather of the past, and conjecture can estimate of the future.

The general subject of the present war is sufficiently known. It is allowed, on both sides, that hostilities began in America, and that the French

[y] Published first in the Literary Magazine, No. iv. from July 15, to Aug. 15, 1756. This periodical work was published by Richardson, in Paternoster-row, but was discontinued about two years after. Dr. Johnson wrote many articles, which have been enumerated by Mr. Boswell, and there are others which I should be inclined to attribute to him, from internal evidence.

and English quarrelled about the boundaries of their settlements, about grounds and rivers, to which, I am afraid, neither can show any other right than that of power, and which neither can occupy but by usurpation, and the dispossession of the natural lords and original inhabitants. Such is the contest, that no honest man can heartily wish success to either party.

It may, indeed, be alleged, that the Indians have granted large tracts of land both to one and to the other; but these grants can add little to the validity of our titles, till it be experienced, how they were obtained; for, if they were extorted by violence, or induced by fraud; by threats, which the miseries of other nations had shown not to be vain; or by promises, of which no performance was ever intended, what are they but new modes of usurpation, but new instances of cruelty and treachery?

And, indeed, what but false hope, or resistless terrour, can prevail upon a weaker nation to invite a stronger into their country, to give their lands to strangers, whom no affinity of manners, or similitude of opinion, can be said to recommend, to permit them to build towns, from which the natives are excluded, to raise fortresses, by which they are intimidated, to settle themselves with such strength, that they cannot afterwards be expelled, but are, for ever, to remain the masters of the original inhabitants, the dictators of their conduct, and the arbiters of their fate?

When we see men acting thus against the precepts of reason, and the instincts of nature, we

cannot hesitate to determine, that, by some means or other, they were debarred from choice; that they were lured or frighted into compliance; that they either granted only what they found impossible to keep, or expected advantages upon the faith of their new inmates, which there was no purpose to confer upon them. It cannot be said, that the Indians originally invited us to their coasts; we went, uncalled and unexpected, to nations who had no imagination that the earth contained any inhabitants, so distant and so different from themselves. We astonished them with our ships, with our arms, and with our general superiority. They yielded to us, as to beings of another and higher race, sent among them from some unknown regions, with power which naked Indians could not resist, and which they were, therefore, by every act of humility, to propitiate, that they, who could so easily destroy, might be induced to spare.

To this influence, and to this only, are to be attributed all the cessions and submissions of the Indian princes, if, indeed, any such cessions were ever made, of which we have no witness, but those who claim from them; and there is no great malignity in suspecting, that those who have robbed have also lied.

Some colonies, indeed, have been established more peaceably than others. The utmost extremity of wrong has not always been practised; but those that have settled in the new world, on the fairest terms, have no other merit than that of a scrivener, who ruins in silence, over a plunderer that seizes by force; all

have taken what had other owners, and all have had recourse to arms, rather than quit the prey on which they had fastened.

The American dispute, between the French and us, is, therefore, only the quarrel of two robbers for the spoils of a passenger; but, as robbers have terms of confederacy, which they are obliged to observe, as members of the gang, so the English and French may have relative rights, and do justice to each other, while both are injuring the Indians. And such, indeed, is the present contest: they have parted the northern continent of America between them, and are now disputing about their boundaries, and each is endeavouring the destruction of the other, by the help of the Indians, whose interest it is that both should be destroyed.

Both nations clamour, with great vehemence, about infractions of limits, violation of treaties, open usurpation, insidious artifices, and breach of faith. The English rail at the perfidious French, and the French at the encroaching English: they quote treaties on each side, charge each other with aspiring to universal monarchy, and complain, on either part, of the insecurity of possession near such turbulent neighbours.

Through this mist of controversy, it can raise no wonder, that the truth is not easily discovered. When a quarrel has been long carried on between individuals, it is often very hard to tell by whom it was begun. Every fact is darkened by distance, by interest, and by multitudes. Information is not easily procured from far; those whom the truth will not

favour, will not step, voluntarily, forth to tell it; and where there are many agents, it is easy for every single action to be concealed.

All these causes concur to the obscurity of the question: By whom were hostilities in America commenced? Perhaps there never can be remembered a time, in which hostilities had ceased. Two powerful colonies, inflamed with immemorial rivalry, and placed out of the superintendence of the mother nations, were not likely to be long at rest. Some opposition was always going forward, some mischief was every day done or meditated, and the borderers were always better pleased with what they could snatch from their neighbours, than what they had of their own.

In this disposition to reciprocal invasion, a cause of dispute never could be wanting. The forests and deserts of America are without landmarks, and, therefore, cannot be particularly specified in stipulations; the appellations of those wide extended regions have, in every mouth, a different meaning, and are understood, on either side, as inclination happens to contract or extend them. Who has yet pretended to define, how much of America is included in Brazil, Mexico, or Peru? It is almost as easy to divide the Atlantick ocean by a line, as clearly to ascertain the limits of those uncultivated, uninhabitable, unmeasured regions.

It is, likewise, to be considered, that contracts concerning boundaries are often left vague and indefinite, without necessity, by the desire of each party, to interpret the ambiguity to its own advan-

tage, when a fit opportunity shall be found. In forming stipulations, the commissaries are often ignorant, and often negligent; they are, sometimes, weary with debate, and contract a tedious discussion into general terms, or refer it to a former treaty, which was never understood. The weaker part is always afraid of requiring explanations, and the stronger always has an interest in leaving the question undecided: thus it will happen, without great caution on either side, that, after long treaties, solemnly ratified, the rights that had been disputed are still equally open to controversy.

In America, it may easily be supposed, that there are tracts of land not yet claimed by either party, and, therefore, mentioned in no treaties; which yet one, or the other, may be afterwards inclined to occupy; but to these vacant and unsettled countries each nation may pretend, as each conceives itself entitled to all that is not expressly granted to the other.

Here, then, is a perpetual ground of contest; every enlargement of the possessions of either will be considered as something taken from the other, and each will endeavour to regain what had never been claimed, but that the other occupied it.

Thus obscure in its original is the American contest. It is difficult to find the first invader, or to tell where invasion properly begins; but, I suppose, it is not to be doubted, that after the last war, when the French had made peace with such apparent superiority, they naturally began to treat us with less respect in distant parts of the world, and to consider us, as a people from whom they had nothing

to fear, and who could no longer presume to contravene their designs, or to check their progress.

The power of doing wrong with impunity seldom waits long for the will; and, it is reasonable to believe, that, in America, the French would avow their purpose of aggrandizing themselves with, at least, as little reserve as in Europe. We may, therefore, readily believe, that they were unquiet neighbours, and had no great regard to right, which they believed us no longer able to enforce.

That in forming a line of forts behind our colonies, if in no other part of their attempt, they had acted against the general intention, if not against the literal terms of treaties, can scarcely be denied; for it never can be supposed, that we intended to be inclosed between the sea and the French garrisons, or preclude ourselves from extending our plantations backwards, to any length that our convenience should require.

With dominion is conferred every thing that can secure dominion. He that has the coast, has, likewise, the sea, to a certain distance; he that possesses a fortress, has the right of prohibiting another fortress to be built within the command of its cannon. When, therefore, we planted the coast of North America, we supposed the possession of the inland region granted to an indefinite extent; and every nation that settled in that part of the world, seems, by the permission of every other nation, to have made the same supposition in its own favour.

Here, then, perhaps, it will be safest to fix the justice of our cause; here we are apparently and

indisputably injured, and this injury may, according to the practice of nations, be justly resented. Whether we have not, in return, made some encroachments upon them, must be left doubtful, till our practices on the Ohio shall be stated and vindicated. There are no two nations, confining on each other, between whom a war may not always be kindled with plausible pretences on either part, as there is always passing between them a reciprocation of injuries, and fluctuation of encroachments.

From the conclusion of the last peace, perpetual complaints of the supplantations and invasions of the French have been sent to Europe, from our colonies, and transmitted to our ministers at Paris, where good words were, sometimes, given us, and the practices of the American commanders were, sometimes, disowned; but no redress was ever obtained, nor is it probable, that any prohibition was sent to America. We were still amused with such doubtful promises, as those who are afraid of war are ready to interpret in their own favour, and the French pushed forward their line of fortresses, and seemed to resolve, that before our complaints were finally dismissed, all remedy should be hopeless.

We, likewise, endeavoured, at the same time, to form a barrier against the Canadians, by sending a colony to New Scotland, a cold uncomfortable tract of ground; of which we had long the nominal possession, before we really began to occupy it. To this, those were invited whom the cessation of war deprived of employment, and made burdensome to their country; and settlers were allured thither by

many fallacious descriptions of fertile valleys and clear skies. What effects these pictures of American happiness had upon my countrymen, I was never informed, but, I suppose, very few sought provision in those frozen regions, whom guilt, or poverty, did not drive from their native country. About the boundaries of this new colony there were some disputes; but, as there was nothing yet worth a contest, the power of the French was not much exerted on that side; some disturbance was, however, given, and some skirmishes ensued. But, perhaps, being peopled chiefly with soldiers, who would rather live by plunder than by agriculture, and who consider war as their best trade, New Scotland would be more obstinately defended than some settlements of far greater value; and the French are too well informed of their own interest, to provoke hostility for no advantage, or to select that country for invasion, where they must hazard much and can win little. They, therefore, pressed on southward, behind our ancient and wealthy settlements, and built fort after fort, at such distances that they might conveniently relieve one another, invade our colonies with sudden incursions, and retire to places of safety, before our people could unite to oppose them.

This design of the French has been long formed, and long known, both in America and Europe, and might, at first, have been easily repressed, had force been used instead of expostulation. When the English attempted a settlement upon the island of St. Lucia, the French, whether justly or not, con-

sidering it as neutral, and forbidden to be occupied by either nation, immediately landed upon it, and destroyed the houses, wasted the plantations, and drove, or carried away, the inhabitants. This was done in the time of peace, when mutual professions of friendship were daily exchanged by the two courts, and was not considered as any violation of treaties, nor was any more than a very soft remonstrance made on our part.

The French, therefore, taught us how to act; but an Hanoverian quarrel with the house of Austria, for some time, induced us to court, at any expense, the alliance of a nation, whose very situation makes them our enemies. We suffered them to destroy our settlements, and to advance their own, which we had an equal right to attack. The time, however, came, at last, when we ventured to quarrel with Spain, and then France no longer suffered the appearance of peace to subsist between us, but armed in defence of her ally.

The events of the war are well known: we pleased ourselves with a victory at Dettingen, where we left our wounded men to the care of our enemies, but our army was broken at Fontenoy and Val; and though, after the disgrace which we suffered in the Mediterranean, we had some naval success, and an accidental dearth made peace necessary for the French, yet they prescribed the conditions, obliged us to give hostages, and acted as conquerors, though as conquerors of moderation.

In this war the Americans distinguished them-

selves in a manner unknown and unexpected. The New English raised an army, and, under the command of Pepperel, took cape Breton, with the assistance of the fleet. This is the most important fortress in America. We pleased ourselves so much with the acquisition, that we could not think of restoring it; and, among the arguments used to inflame the people against Charles Stuart, it was very clamorously urged, that if he gained the kingdom, he would give cape Breton back to the French.

The French, however, had a more easy expedient to regain cape Breton, than by exalting Charles Stuart to the English throne. They took, in their turn, fort St. George, and had our East India company wholly in their power, whom they restored, at the peace, to their former possessions, that they may continue to export our silver.

Cape Breton, therefore, was restored, and the French were reestablished in America, with equal power and greater spirit, having lost nothing by the war, which they had before gained.

To the general reputation of their arms, and that habitual superiority which they derive from it, they owe their power in America, rather than to any real strength or circumstances of advantage. Their numbers are yet not great; their trade, though daily improved, is not very extensive; their country is barren; their fortresses, though numerous, are weak, and rather shelters from wild beasts, or savage nations, than places built for defence against bombs or cannons. Cape Breton has been found not to be im-

pregnable; nor, if we consider the state of the places possessed by the two nations in America, is there any reason upon which the French should have presumed to molest us, but that they thought our spirit so broken, that we durst not resist them; and in this opinion our long forbearance easily confirmed them.

We forgot, or rather avoided to think, that what we delayed to do, must be done at last, and done with more difficulty, as it was delayed longer; that while we were complaining, and they were eluding, or answering our complaints, fort was rising upon fort, and one invasion made a precedent for another.

This confidence of the French is exalted by some real advantages. If they possess, in those countries, less than we, they have more to gain, and less to hazard; if they are less numerous, they are better united.

The French compose one body with one head. They have all the same interest, and agree to pursue it by the same means. They are subject to a governour, commissioned by an absolute monarch, and participating the authority of his master. Designs are, therefore, formed without debate, and executed without impediment. They have yet more martial than mercantile ambition, and seldom suffer their military schemes to be entangled with collateral projects of gain: they have no wish but for conquest, of which they justly consider riches as the consequence.

Some advantages they will always have, as in-

vaders. They make war at the hazard of their enemies: the contest being carried on in our territories, we must lose more by a victory, than they will suffer by a defeat. They will subsist, while they stay, upon our plantations; and, perhaps, destroy them, when they can stay no longer. If we pursue them, and carry the war into their dominions, our difficulties will increase every step as we advance, for we shall leave plenty behind us, and find nothing in Canada, but lakes and forests, barren and trackless; our enemies will shut themselves up in their forts, against which it is difficult to bring cannon through so rough a country, and which, if they are provided with good magazines, will soon starve those who besiege them.

All these are the natural effects of their government and situation; they are accidentally more formidable, as they are less happy. But the favour of the Indians, which they enjoy, with very few exceptions, among all the nations of the northern continent, we ought to consider with other thoughts; this favour we might have enjoyed, if we had been careful to deserve it. The French, by having these savage nations on their side, are always supplied with spies and guides, and with auxiliaries, like the Tartars to the Turks, or the Hussars to the Germans, of no great use against troops ranged in order of battle, but very well qualified to maintain a war among woods and rivulets, where much mischief may be done by unexpected onsets, and safety be obtained by quick retreats. They can waste a colony by sudden inroads, surprise the straggling planters,

frighten the inhabitants into towns, hinder the cultivation of lands, and starve those whom they are not able to conquer[z].

The Political State of Great Britain

AN INTRODUCTION

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1756[a]

The present system of English politicks may properly be said to have taken rise in the reign of queen Elizabeth. At this time the protestant religion was established, which naturally allied us to the reformed state, and made all the popish powers our enemies.

We began in the same reign to extend our trade, by which we made it necessary to ourselves to watch the commercial progress of our neighbours; and if not to incommode and obstruct their traffick, to hinder them from impairing ours.

We then, likewise, settled colonies in America, which was become the great scene of European ambition; for, seeing with what treasures the Spaniards were annually enriched from Mexico and Peru, every nation imagined, that an American conquest, or plantation, would certainly fill the mother country with gold and silver. This produced a large extent of very distant dominions, of which we, at this time, neither knew nor foresaw the advantage or incumbrance; we seem to have snatched them into our hands, upon no very just principles of policy, only because every state, according to a prejudice

[z] In the magazine, this article is promised "to be continued;" but the author was, by whatever means, diverted from it, and no continuation appears.

[a] This was the introductory article to the Literary Magazine, No. i.

of long continuance, concludes itself more powerful, as its territories become larger.

The discoveries of new regions, which were then every day made, the profit of remote traffick, and the necessity of long voyages, produced, in a few years, a great multiplication of shipping. The sea was considered as the wealthy element; and, by degrees, a new kind of sovereignty arose, called naval dominion.

As the chief trade of the world, so the chief maritime power was at first in the hands of the Portuguese and Spaniards, who, by a compact, to which the consent of other princes was not asked, had divided the newly discovered countries between them; but the crown of Portugal having fallen to the king of Spain, or being seized by him, he was master of the ships of the two nations, with which he kept all the coasts of Europe in alarm, till the armada, which he had raised, at a vast expense, for the conquest of England, was destroyed, which put a stop, and almost an end, to the naval power of the Spaniards.

At this time, the Dutch, who were oppressed by the Spaniards, and feared yet greater evils than they felt, resolved no longer to endure the insolence of their masters: they, therefore, revolted; and, after a struggle, in which they were assisted by the money and forces of Elizabeth, erected an independent and powerful commonwealth.

When the inhabitants of the Low Countries had formed their system of government, and some remission of the war gave them leisure to form

schemes of future prosperity, they easily perceived, that, as their territories were narrow, and their numbers small, they could preserve themselves only by that power which is the consequence of wealth; and that, by a people whose country produced only the necessaries of life, wealth was not to be acquired, but from foreign dominions, and by the transportation of the products of one country into another.

From this necessity, thus justly estimated, arose a plan of commerce, which was, for many years, prosecuted with industry and success, perhaps never seen in the world before, and by which the poor tenants of mud-walled villages, and impassable bogs, erected themselves into high and mighty states, who put the greatest monarchs at defiance, whose alliance was courted by the proudest, and whose power was dreaded by the fiercest nation. By the establishment of this state, there arose, to England, a new ally, and a new rival.

At this time, which seems to be the period destined for the change of the face of Europe, France began first to rise into power, and, from defending her own provinces with difficulty and fluctuating success, to threaten her neighbours with encroachments and devastations. Henry the fourth having, after a long struggle, obtained the crown, found it easy to govern nobles, exhausted and wearied with a long civil war, and having composed the disputes between the protestants and papists, so as to obtain, at least, a truce for both parties, was at leisure to accumulate treasure, and raise forces, which he purposed to have employed in a design of settling for ever the

balance of Europe. Of this great scheme he lived not to see the vanity, or to feel the disappointment; for he was murdered in the midst of his mighty preparations.

The French, however, were, in this reign, taught to know their own power; and the great designs of a king, whose wisdom they had so long experienced, even though they were not brought to actual experiment, disposed them to consider themselves as masters of the destiny of their neighbours; and, from that time, he that shall nicely examine their schemes and conduct, will, I believe, find that they began to take an air of superiority, to which they had never pretended before; and that they have been always employed, more or less openly, upon schemes of dominion, though with frequent interruptions from domestick troubles, and with those intermissions which human counsels must always suffer, as men intrusted with great affairs are dissipated in youth, and languid in age; are embarrassed by competitors, or, without any external reason, change their minds.

France was now no longer in dread of insults, and invasions from England. She was not only able to maintain her own territories, but prepared, on all occasions, to invade others; and we had now a neighbour, whose interest it was to be an enemy, and who has disturbed us, from that time to this, with open hostility, or secret machinations.

Such was the state of England, and its neighbours, when Elizabeth left the crown to James of Scotland. It has not, I think, been frequently observed,

by historians, at how critical a time the union of the two kingdoms happened. Had England and Scotland continued separate kingdoms, when France was established in the full possession of her natural power, the Scots, in continuance of the league, which it would now have been more than ever their interest to observe, would, upon every instigation of the French court, have raised an army with French money, and harassed us with an invasion, in which they would have thought themselves successful, whatever numbers they might have left behind them. To a people warlike and indigent, an incursion into a rich country is never hurtful. The pay of France, and the plunder of the northern countries, would always have tempted them to hazard their lives, and we should have been under a necessity of keeping a line of garrisons along our border.

This trouble, however, we escaped, by the accession of king James; but it is uncertain, whether his natural disposition did not injure us more than this accidental condition happened to benefit us. He was a man of great theoretical knowledge, but of no practical wisdom; he was very well able to discern the true interest of himself, his kingdom, and his posterity, but sacrificed it, upon all occasions, to his present pleasure or his present ease; so conscious of his own knowledge and abilities, that he would not suffer a minister to govern, and so lax of attention, and timorous of opposition, that he was not able to govern for himself. With this character, James quietly saw the Dutch invade our commerce; the French grew every day stronger and stronger; and the protestant

interest, of which he boasted himself the head, was oppressed on every side, while he writ, and hunted, and despatched ambassadours, who, when their master's weakness was once known, were treated, in foreign courts, with very little ceremony. James, however, took care to be flattered at home, and was neither angry nor ashamed at the appearance that he made in other countries.

Thus England grew weaker, or, what is, in political estimation, the same thing, saw her neighbours grow stronger, without receiving proportionable additions to her own power. Not that the mischief was so great as it is generally conceived or represented; for, I believe, it may be made to appear, that the wealth of the nation was, in this reign, very much increased, though that of the crown was lessened. Our reputation for war was impaired; but commerce seems to have been carried on with great industry and vigour, and nothing was wanting, but that we should have defended ourselves from the encroachments of our neighbours.

The inclination to plant colonies in America still continued, and this being the only project in which men of adventure and enterprise could exert their qualities, in a pacifick reign, multitudes, who were discontented with their condition in their native country, and such multitudes there will always be, sought relief, or, at least, a change, in the western regions, where they settled, in the northern part of the continent, at a distance from the Spaniards, at that time almost the only nation that had any power or will to obstruct us.

Such was the condition of this country, when the unhappy Charles inherited the crown. He had seen the errours of his father, without being able to prevent them, and, when he began his reign, endeavoured to raise the nation to its former dignity. The French papists had begun a new war upon the protestants: Charles sent a fleet to invade Rhée and relieve Rochelle, but his attempts were defeated, and the protestants were subdued. The Dutch, grown wealthy and strong, claimed the right of fishing in the British seas: this claim the king, who saw the increasing power of the states of Holland, resolved to contest. But, for this end, it was necessary to build a fleet, and a fleet could not be built without expense: he was advised to levy ship-money, which gave occasion to the civil war, of which the events and conclusion are too well known.

While the inhabitants of this island were embroiled among themselves, the power of France and Holland was every day increasing. The Dutch had overcome the difficulties of their infant commonwealth; and, as they still retained their vigour and industry, from rich grew continually richer, and from powerful more powerful. They extended their traffick, and had not yet admitted luxury; so that they had the means and the will to accumulate wealth, without any incitement to spend it. The French, who wanted nothing to make them powerful, but a prudent regulation of their revenues, and a proper use of their natural advantages, by the successive care of skilful ministers, became, every day, stronger, and more conscious of their strength.

About this time it was, that the French first began to turn their thoughts to traffick and navigation, and to desire, like other nations, an American territory. All the fruitful and valuable parts of the western world were, already, either occupied, or claimed; and nothing remained for France, but the leavings of other navigators, for she was not yet haughty enough to seize what the neighbouring powers had already appropriated.

The French, therefore, contented themselves with sending a colony to Canada, a cold, uncomfortable, uninviting region, from which nothing but furs and fish were to be had, and where the new inhabitants could only pass a laborious and necessitous life, in perpetual regret of the deliciousness and plenty of their native country.

Notwithstanding the opinion which our countrymen have been taught to entertain of the comprehension and foresight of French politicians, I am not able to persuade myself, that when this colony was first planted, it was thought of much value, even by those that encouraged it; there was, probably, nothing more intended, than to provide a drain, into which the waste of an exuberant nation might be thrown, a place where those who could do no good might live without the power of doing mischief. Some new advantage they, undoubtedly, saw, or imagined themselves to see, and what more was necessary to the establishment of the colony, was supplied by natural inclination to experiments, and that impatience of doing nothing, to which man-

kind, perhaps, owe much of what is imagined to be effected by more splendid motives.

In this region of desolate sterility they settled themselves, upon whatever principle; and, as they have, from that time, had the happiness of a government, by which no interest has been neglected, nor any part of their subjects overlooked, they have, by continual encouragement and assistance from France, been perpetually enlarging their bounds, and increasing their numbers.

These were, at first, like other nations who invaded America, inclined to consider the neighbourhood of the natives, as troublesome and dangerous, and are charged with having destroyed great numbers; but they are now grown wiser, if not honester, and, instead of endeavouring to frighten the Indians away, they invite them to intermarriage and cohabitation, and allure them, by all practicable methods, to become the subjects of the king of France.

If the Spaniards, when they first took possession of the newly discovered world, instead of destroying the inhabitants by thousands, had either had the urbanity or the policy to have conciliated them by kind treatment, and to have united them, gradually, to their own people, such an accession might have been made to the power of the king of Spain, as would have made him far the greatest monarch that ever yet ruled in the globe; but the opportunity was lost by foolishness and cruelty, and now can never be recovered.

When the parliament had finally prevailed over our king, and the army over the parliament, the in-

terests of the two commonwealths of England and Holland soon appeared to be opposite, and a new government declared war against the Dutch. In this contest was exerted the utmost power of the two nations, and the Dutch were finally defeated, yet not with such evidence of superiority, as left us much reason to boast our victory: they were obliged, however, to solicit peace, which was granted them on easy conditions; and Cromwell, who was now possessed of the supreme power, was left at leisure to pursue other designs.

The European powers had not yet ceased to look with envy on the Spanish acquisitions in America, and, therefore, Cromwell thought, that if he gained any part of these celebrated regions, he should exalt his own reputation, and enrich the country. He, therefore, quarrelled with the Spaniards upon some subject of contention, as he that is resolved upon hostility may always find; and sent Penn and Venables into the western seas. They first landed in Hispaniola, whence they were driven off, with no great reputation to themselves; and that they might not return without having done something, they afterwards invaded Jamaica, where they found less resistance, and obtained that island, which was afterwards consigned to us, being probably of little value to the Spaniards, and continues, to this day, a place of great wealth and dreadful wickedness, a den of tyrants and a dungeon of slaves.

Cromwell, who, perhaps, had not leisure to study foreign politicks, was very fatally mistaken with regard to Spain and France. Spain had been the

last power in Europe which had openly pretended to give law to other nations, and the memory of this terrour remained, when the real cause was at an end. We had more lately been frighted by Spain than by France; and though very few were then alive of the generation that had their sleep broken by the armada, yet the name of the Spaniards was still terrible and a war against them was pleasing to the people.

Our own troubles had left us very little desire to look out upon the continent; an inveterate prejudice hindered us from perceiving, that, for more than half a century, the power of France had been increasing, and that of Spain had been growing less; nor does it seem to have been remembered, which yet required no great depth of policy to discern, that of two monarchs, neither of which could be long our friend, it was our interest to have the weaker near us; or, that if a war should happen, Spain, however wealthy or strong in herself, was, by the dispersion of her territories, more obnoxious to the attacks of a naval power, and, consequently, had more to fear from us, and had it less in her power to hurt us.

All these considerations were overlooked by the wisdom of that age; and Cromwell assisted the French to drive the Spaniards out of Flanders, at a time when it was our interest to have supported the Spaniards against France, as formerly the Hollanders against Spain, by which we might, at least, have retarded the growth of the French power, though, I think, it must have finally prevailed.

During this time our colonies, which were less disturbed by our commotions than the mother-country, naturally increased; it is probable that many, who were unhappy at home, took shelter in those remote regions, where, for the sake of inviting greater numbers, every one was allowed to think and live his own way. The French settlement, in the mean time, went slowly forward, too inconsiderable to raise any jealousy, and too weak to attempt any encroachments.

When Cromwell died, the confusions that followed produced the restoration of monarchy, and some time was employed in repairing the ruins of our constitution, and restoring the nation to a state of peace. In every change, there will be many that suffer real or imaginary grievances, and, therefore, many will be dissatisfied. This was, perhaps, the reason why several colonies had their beginning in the reign of Charles the second. The quakers willingly sought refuge in Pennsylvania; and it is not unlikely that Carolina owed its inhabitants to the remains of that restless disposition, which had given so much disturbance to our country, and had now no opportunity of acting at home.

The Dutch, still continuing to increase in wealth and power, either kindled the resentment of their neighbours by their insolence, or raised their envy by their prosperity. Charles made war upon them without much advantage; but they were obliged, at last, to confess him the sovereign of the narrow seas. They were reduced almost to extremities by an invasion from France; but soon recovered from their

consternation, and, by the fluctuation of war, regained their cities and provinces with the same speed as they had lost them.

During the time of Charles the second, the power of France was every day increasing; and Charles, who never disturbed himself with remote consequences, saw the progress of her arms and the extension of her dominions, with very little uneasiness. He was, indeed, sometimes driven by the prevailing faction, into confederacies against her; but as he had, probably, a secret partiality in her favour, he never persevered long in acting against her, nor ever acted with much vigour; so that, by his feeble resistance, he rather raised her confidence than hindered her designs.

About this time the French first began to perceive the advantage of commerce, and the importance of a naval force; and such encouragement was given to manufactures, and so eagerly was every project received, by which trade could be advanced, that, in a few years, the sea was filled with their ships, and all the parts of the world crowded with their merchants. There is, perhaps, no instance in human story, of such a change produced in so short a time, in the schemes and manners of a people, of so many new sources of wealth opened, and such numbers of artificers and merchants made to start out of the ground, as was seen in the ministry of Colbert.

Now it was that the power of France became formidable to England. Her dominions were large before, and her armies numerous; but her operations

were necessarily confined to the continent. She had neither ships for the transportation of her troops, nor money for their support in distant expeditions. Colbert saw both these wants, and saw that commerce only would supply them. The fertility of their country furnishes the French with commodities; the poverty of the common people keeps the price of labour low. By the obvious practice of selling much and buying little, it was apparent, that they would soon draw the wealth of other countries into their own; and, by carrying out their merchandise in their own vessels, a numerous body of sailors would quickly be raised.

This was projected, and this was performed. The king of France was soon enabled to bribe those whom he could not conquer, and to terrify, with his fleets, those whom his armies could not have approached. The influence of France was suddenly diffused all over the globe; her arms were dreaded, and her pensions received in remote regions, and those were almost ready to acknowledge her sovereignty, who, a few years before, had scarcely heard her name. She thundered on the coasts of Africa, and received ambassadours from Siam.

So much may be done by one wise man endeavouring, with honesty, the advantage of the publick. But that we may not rashly condemn all ministers, as wanting wisdom or integrity, whose counsels have produced no such apparent benefits to their country, it must be considered, that Colbert had means of acting, which our government does not allow. He could enforce all his orders by the power of an ab-

solute monarch; he could compel individuals to sacrifice their private profit to the general good; he could make one understanding preside over many hands, and remove difficulties by quick and violent expedients. Where no man thinks himself under any obligation to submit to another, and, instead of cooperating in one great scheme, every one hastens through by-paths to private profit, no great change can suddenly be made; nor is superiour knowledge of much effect, where every man resolves to use his own eyes and his own judgment, and every one applauds his own dexterity and diligence, in proportion as he becomes rich sooner than his neighbour.

Colonies are always the effects and causes of navigation. They who visit many countries find some, in which pleasure, profit, or safety invite them to settle; and these settlements, when they are once made, must keep a perpetual correspondence with the original country to which they are subject, and on which they depend for protection in danger, and supplies in necessity. So that a country, once discovered and planted, must always find employment for shipping, more certainly than any foreign commerce, which, depending on casualties, may be sometimes more, and sometimes less, and which other nations may contract or suppress. A trade to colonies can never be much impaired, being, in reality, only an intercourse between distant provinces of the same empire, from which intruders are easily excluded; likewise the interest and affection of the correspondent parties, however distant, is the same.

On this reason all nations, whose power has been

exerted on the ocean, have fixed colonies in remote parts of the world; and while those colonies subsisted, navigation, if it did not increase, was always preserved from total decay. With this policy the French were well acquainted, and, therefore, improved and augmented the settlements in America and other regions, in proportion as they advanced their schemes of naval greatness.

The exact time, in which they made their acquisitions in America, or other quarters of the globe, it is not necessary to collect. It is sufficient to observe, that their trade and their colonies increased together; and, if their naval armaments were carried on, as they really were, in greater proportion to their commerce, than can be practised in other countries, it must be attributed to the martial disposition at that time prevailing in the nation, to the frequent wars which Lewis the fourteenth made upon his neighbours, and to the extensive commerce of the English and Dutch, which afforded so much plunder to privateers, that war was more lucrative than traffick.

Thus the naval power of France continued to increase during the reign of Charles the second, who, between his fondness of ease and pleasure, the struggles of faction, which he could not suppress, and his inclination to the friendship of absolute monarchy, had not much power or desire to repress it. And of James the second it could not be expected, that he should act against his neighbours with great vigour, having the whole body of his subjects to oppose. He was not ignorant of the real

interest of his country; he desired its power and its happiness, and thought rightly, that there is no happiness without religion; but he thought very erroneously and absurdly, that there is no religion without popery.

When the necessity of self-preservation had impelled the subjects of James to drive him from the throne, there came a time in which the passions, as well as interest of the government, acted against the French, and in which it may, perhaps, be reasonably doubted, whether the desire of humbling France was not stronger, than that of exalting England: of this, however, it is not necessary to inquire, since, though the intention may be different, the event will be the same. All mouths were now open to declare what every eye had observed before, that the arms of France were become dangerous to Europe; and that, if her encroachments were suffered a little longer, resistance would be too late.

It was now determined to reassert the empire of the sea; but it was more easily determined than performed: the French made a vigorous defence against the united power of England and Holland, and were sometimes masters of the ocean, though the two maritime powers were united against them. At length, however, they were defeated at La Hogue; a great part of their fleet was destroyed, and they were reduced to carry on the war only with their privateers, from whom there was suffered much petty mischief, though there was no danger of conquest or invasion. They distressed our merchants, and obliged us to the continual expense of

convoys and fleets of observation; and, by skulking in little coves and shallow waters, escaped our pursuit.

In this reign began our confederacy with the Dutch, which mutual interest has now improved into a friendship, conceived by some to be inseparable; and, from that time, the states began to be termed, in the style of politicians, our faithful friends, the allies which nature has given us, our protestant confederates, and by many other names of national endearment. We have, it is true, the same interest, as opposed to France, and some resemblance of religion, as opposed to popery; but we have such a rivalry, in respect of commerce, as will always keep us from very close adherence to each other. No mercantile man, or mercantile nation, has any friendship but for money, and alliance between them will last no longer, than their common safety, or common profit is endangered; no longer than they have an enemy, who threatens to take from each more than either can steal from the other.

We were both sufficiently interested in repressing the ambition, and obstructing the commerce of France; and, therefore, we concurred with as much fidelity, and as regular cooperation, as is commonly found. The Dutch were in immediate danger, the armies of their enemies hovered over their country, and, therefore, they were obliged to dismiss, for a time, their love of money, and their narrow projects of private profit, and to do what a trader does

not willingly, at any time, believe necessary, to sacrifice a part for the preservation of the whole.

A peace was at length made, and the French, with their usual vigour and industry, rebuilt their fleets, restored their commerce, and became, in a very few years, able to contest again the dominion of the sea. Their ships were well built, and always very numerously manned; their commanders, having no hopes but from their bravery, or their fortune, were resolute, and, being very carefully educated for the sea, were eminently skilful.

All this was soon perceived, when queen Anne, the then darling of England, declared war against France. Our success by sea, though sufficient to keep us from dejection, was not such as dejected our enemies. It is, indeed, to be confessed, that we did not exert our whole naval strength; Marlborough was the governour of our counsels, and the great view of Marlborough was a war by land, which he knew well how to conduct, both to the honour of his country and his own profit. The fleet was, therefore, starved, that the army might be supplied, and naval advantages were neglected, for the sake of taking a town in Flanders, to be garrisoned by our allies. The French, however, were so weakened by one defeat after another, that, though their fleet was never destroyed by any total overthrow, they at last retained it in their harbours, and applied their whole force to the resistance of the confederate army, that now began to approach their frontiers, and threatened to lay waste their provinces and cities.

In the latter years of this war, the danger of their

neighbourhood in America, seems to have been considered, and a fleet was fitted out, and supplied with a proper number of land forces, to seize Quebec, the capital of Canada, or New France; but this expedition miscarried, like that of Anson against the Spaniards, by the lateness of the season, and our ignorance of the coasts on which we were to act. We returned with loss, and only excited our enemies to greater vigilance, and, perhaps, to stronger fortifications.

When the peace of Utrecht was made, which those, who clamoured among us most loudly against it, found it their interest to keep, the French applied themselves, with the utmost industry, to the extension of their trade, which we were so far from hindering, that, for many years, our ministry thought their friendship of such value, as to be cheaply purchased by whatever concession.

Instead, therefore, of opposing, as we had hitherto professed to do, the boundless ambition of the house of Bourbon, we became, on a sudden, solicitous for its exaltation, and studious of its interest. We assisted the schemes of France and Spain with our fleets, and endeavoured to make these our friends by servility, whom nothing but power will keep quiet, and who must always be our enemies, while they are endeavouring to grow greater, and we determine to remain free.

That nothing might be omitted, which could testify our willingness to continue, on any terms, the good friends of France, we were content to assist, not only their conquests, but their traffick; and,

though we did not openly repeal the prohibitory laws, we yet tamely suffered commerce to be carried on between the two nations, and wool was daily imported, to enable them to make cloth, which they carried to our markets, and sold cheaper than we.

During all this time they were extending and strengthening their settlements in America, contriving new modes of traffick, and framing new alliances with the Indian nations. They began now to find these northern regions, barren and desolate as they are, sufficiently valuable to desire, at least, a nominal possession, that might furnish a pretence for the exclusion of others; they, therefore, extended their claim to tracts of land, which they could never hope to occupy, took care to give their dominions an unlimited magnitude, have given, in their maps, the name of Louisiana to a country, of which part is claimed by the Spaniards, and part by the English, without any regard to ancient boundaries, or prior discovery.

When the return of Columbus from his great voyage had filled all Europe with wonder and curiosity, Henry the seventh sent Sebastian Cabot to try what could be found for the benefit of England: he declined the track of Columbus, and, steering to the westward, fell upon the island, which, from that time, was called by the English Newfoundland. Our princes seem to have considered themselves as entitled, by their right of prior seizure, to the northern parts of America, as the Spaniards were allowed, by universal consent, their claim to the southern region for the same reason; and we, accordingly,

made our principal settlements within the limits of our own discoveries, and, by degrees, planted the eastern coast, from Newfoundland to Georgia.

As we had, according to the European principles which allow nothing to the natives of these regions, our choice of situation in this extensive country, we naturally fixed our habitations along the coast, for the sake of traffick and correspondence and all the conveniencies of navigable rivers. And when one port or river was occupied, the next colony, instead of fixing themselves in the inland parts behind the former, went on southward, till they pleased themselves with another maritime situation. For this reason our colonies have more length than depth; their extent, from east to west, or from the sea to the interiour country, bears no proportion to their reach along the coast, from north to south.

It was, however, understood, by a kind of tacit compact among the commercial powers, that possession of the coast included a right to the inland; and, therefore, the charters granted to the several colonies, limit their districts only from north to south, leaving their possessions from east to west unlimited and discretional, supposing that, as the colony increases, they may take lands as they shall want them, the possession of the coasts, excluding other navigators, and the unhappy Indians having no right of nature or of nations.

This right of the first European possessour was not disputed, till it became the interest of the French to question it. Canada, or New France, on which they made their first settlement, is situated eastward

of our colonies, between which they pass up the great river of St. Lawrence, with Newfoundland on the north, and Nova Scotia on the south. Their establishment in this country was neither envied nor hindered; and they lived here, in no great numbers, a long time, neither molesting their European neighbours, nor molested by them.

But when they grew stronger and more numerous, they began to extend their territories; and, as it is natural for men to seek their own convenience, the desire of more fertile and agreeable habitations tempted them southward. There is land enough to the north and west of their settlements, which they may occupy with as good right as can be shown by the other European usurpers, and which neither the English nor Spaniards will contest; but of this cold region, they have enough already, and their resolution was to get a better country. This was not to be had, but by settling to the west of our plantations, on ground which has been, hitherto, supposed to belong to us.

Hither, therefore, they resolved to remove, and to fix, at their own discretion, the western border of our colonies, which was, heretofore, considered as unlimited. Thus by forming a line of forts, in some measure parallel to the coast, they inclose us between their garrisons, and the sea, and not only hinder our extension westward, but, whenever they have a sufficient navy in the sea, can harass us on each side, as they can invade us, at pleasure, from one or other of their forts.

This design was not, perhaps, discovered as soon

as it was formed, and was certainly not opposed so soon as it was discovered: we foolishly hoped, that their encroachments would stop; that they would be prevailed on, by treaty and remonstrance, to give up what they had taken, or to put limits to themselves. We suffered them to establish one settlement after another, to pass boundary after boundary, and add fort to fort, till, at last, they grew strong enough to avow their designs, and defy us to obstruct them.

By these provocations, long continued, we are, at length, forced into a war, in which we have had, hitherto, very ill fortune. Our troops, under Braddock, were dishonourably defeated; our fleets have yet done nothing more than taken a few merchant ships, and have distressed some private families, but have very little weakened the power of France. The detention of their seamen makes it, indeed, less easy for them to fit out their navy; but this deficiency will be easily supplied by the alacrity of the nation, which is always eager for war.

It is unpleasing to represent our affairs to our own disadvantage; yet it is necessary to show the evils which we desire to be removed; and, therefore, some account may very properly be given of the measures which have given them their present superiority.

They are said to be supplied from France with better governours than our colonies have the fate to obtain from England. A French governour is seldom chosen for any other reason than his qualifications for his trust. To be a bankrupt at home, or to be so infamously vitious, that he cannot be decently

protected in his own country, seldom recommends any man to the government of a French colony. Their officers are commonly skilful, either in war or commerce, and are taught to have no expectation of honour or preferment, but from the justice and vigour of their administration.

Their great security is the friendship of the natives, and to this advantage they have certainly an indubitable right; because it is the consequence of their virtue. It is ridiculous to imagine, that the friendship of nations, whether civil or barbarous, can be gained and kept but by kind treatment; and, surely, they who intrude, uncalled, upon the country of a distant people, ought to consider the natives as worthy of common kindness, and content themselves to rob, without insulting them. The French, as has been already observed, admit the Indians, by intermarriage, to an equality with themselves; and those nations, with which they have no such near intercourse, they gain over to their interest by honesty in their dealings. Our factors and traders, having no other purpose in view than immediate profit, use all the arts of an European counting-house, to defraud the simple hunter of his furs.

These are some of the causes of our present weakness; our planters are always quarrelling with their governour, whom they consider as less to be trusted than the French; and our traders hourly alienate the Indians by their tricks and oppressions, and we continue every day to show, by new proofs, that no people can be great, who have ceased to be virtuous.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE TREATY

Between his Britannick majesty and imperial majesty of all the Russias, signed at Moscow, Dec. 11, 1742; the treaty between his Britannick majesty and the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, signed June 18, 1755; and the treaty between his Britannick majesty and her imperial majesty of all the Russias, signed at St. Petersburg, Sept. $\frac{19}{30}$, 1755[b]

THESE are the treaties which, for many months, filled the senate with debates, and the kingdom with clamours; which were represented, on one part, as instances of the most profound policy and the most active care of the publick welfare, and, on the other, as acts of the most contemptible folly and most flagrant corruption, as violations of the great trust of government, by which the wealth of Britain is sacrificed to private views and to a particular province.

What honours our ministers and negotiators may expect to be paid to their wisdom, it is hard to determine, for the demands of vanity are not easily estimated. They should consider, before they call too loudly for encomiums, that they live in an age, when the power of gold is no longer a secret, and in which no man finds much difficulty in making a bargain, with money in his hand. To hire troops is very easy to those who are willing to pay their price. It appears, therefore, that whatever has been done, was done by means which every man knows how to use, if fortune is kind enough to put them in his power. To arm the nations of the north in the cause of Britain, to bring down hosts against France, from the polar circle, has, indeed, a sound of magnificence, which might induce a mind unacquainted with publick affairs to imagine, that some effort of policy,

[b] From the Literary Magazine, for July, 1756.

more than human, had been exerted, by which distant nations were armed in our defence, and the influence of Britain was extended to the utmost limits of the world. But when this striking phenomenon of negotiation is more nearly inspected, it appears a bargain, merely mercantile, of one power that wanted troops more than money, with another that wanted money, and was burdened with troops; between whom their mutual wants made an easy contract, and who have no other friendship for each other, than reciprocal convenience happens to produce.

We shall, therefore, leave the praises of our ministers to others, yet not without this acknowledgment, that if they have done little, they do not seem to boast of doing much; and, that whether influenced by modesty or frugality, they have not wearied the publick with mercenary panegyrists, but have been content with the concurrence of the parliament, and have not much solicited the applauses of the people.

In publick, as in private transactions, men more frequently deviate from the right, for want of virtue, than of wisdom; and those who declare themselves dissatisfied with these treaties, impute them not to folly, but corruption.

By these advocates for the independence of Britain, who, whether their arguments be just, or not, seem to be most favourably heard by the people, it is alleged, that these treaties are expensive, without advantage; that they waste the treasure, which we want for our own defence, upon a foreign interest; and pour the gains of our commerce into the coffers of princes, whose enmity cannot hurt,

nor friendship help us; who set their subjects to sale, like sheep or oxen, without any inquiry after the intentions of the buyer; and will withdraw the troops, with which they have supplied us, whenever a higher bidder shall be found.

This, perhaps, is true; but whether it be true, or false, is not worth inquiry. We did not expect to buy their friendship, but their troops; nor did we examine upon what principle we were supplied with assistance; it was sufficient that we wanted forces, and that they were willing to furnish them. Policy never pretended to make men wise and good; the utmost of her power is to make the best use of men, such as they are, to lay hold on lucky hours, to watch the present wants, and present interests of others, and make them subservient to her own convenience.

It is further urged, with great vehemence, that these troops of Russia and Hesse are not hired in defence of Britain; that we are engaged, in a naval war, for territories on a distant continent; and that these troops, though mercenaries, can never be auxiliaries; that they increase the burden of the war, without hastening its conclusion, or promoting its success; since they can neither be sent into America, the only part of the world where England can, on the present occasion, have any employment for land-forces, nor be put into our ships, by which, and by which only, we are now to oppose and subdue our enemies.

Nature has stationed us in an island, inaccessible but by sea; and we are now at war with an enemy,

whose naval power is inferiour to our own, and from whom, therefore, we are in no danger of invasion: to what purpose, then, are troops hired in such uncommon numbers? To what end do we procure strength, which we cannot exert, and exhaust the nation with subsidies, at a time when nothing is disputed, which the princes, who receive our subsidies, can defend? If we had purchased ships, and hired seamen, we had apparently increased our power, and made ourselves formidable to our enemies, and, if any increase of security be possible, had secured ourselves still better from invasions: but what can the regiments of Russia, or of Hesse, contribute to the defence of the coasts of England; or, by what assistance can they repay us the sums, which we have stipulated to pay for their costly friendship?

The king of Great Britain has, indeed, a territory on the continent, of which the natives of this island scarcely knew the name, till the present family was called to the throne, and yet know little more than that our king visits it from time to time. Yet, for the defence of this country, are these subsidies apparently paid, and these troops evidently levied. The riches of our nation are sent into distant countries, and the strength, which should be employed in our own quarrel, consequently impaired, for the sake of dominions, the interest of which has no connexion with ours, and which, by the act of succession, we took care to keep separate from the British kingdoms.

To this the advocates for the subsidies say, that unreasonable stipulations, whether in the act of set-

tlement, or any other contract, are, in themselves, void; and that if a country connected with England, by subjection to the same sovereign, is endangered by an English quarrel, it must be defended by English force; and that we do not engage in a war, for the sake of Hanover, but that Hanover is, for our sake, exposed to danger.

Those who brought in these foreign troops have still something further to say in their defence, and of no honest plea is it our intention to defraud them. They grant, that the terrour of invasion may, possibly, be groundless; that the French may want the power, or the courage, to attack us in our own country; but they maintain, likewise, that an invasion is possible, that the armies of France are so numerous, that she may hazard a large body on the ocean, without leaving herself exposed; that she is exasperated to the utmost degree of acrimony, and would be willing to do us mischief, at her own peril. They allow, that the invaders may be intercepted at sea, or that, if they land, they may be defeated by our native troops. But they say, and say justly, that danger is better avoided than encountered; that those ministers consult more the good of their country, who prevent invasion, than repel it; and that, if these auxiliaries have only saved us from the anxiety of expecting an enemy at our doors, or from the tumult and distress which an invasion, how soon soever repressed, would have produced, the publick money is not spent in vain.

These arguments are admitted by some, and by others rejected. But even those that admit them,

can admit them only as pleas of necessity; for they consider the reception of mercenaries into our country, as the desperate remedy of desperate distress; and think, with great reason, that all means of prevention should be tried, to save us from any second need of such doubtful succours.

That we are able to defend our own country, that arms are most safely entrusted to our own hands, and that we have strength, and skill, and courage, equal to the best of the nations of the continent, is the opinion of every Englishman, who can think without prejudice, and speak without influence; and, therefore, it will not be easy to persuade the nation, a nation long renowned for valour, that it can need the help of foreigners to defend it from invasion. We have been long without the need of arms by our good fortune, and long without the use by our negligence; so long, that the practice, and almost the name, of our old trained bands is forgotten; but the story of ancient times will tell us, that the trained bands were once able to maintain the quiet and safety of their country; and reason, without history, will inform us, that those men are most likely to fight bravely, or, at least, to fight obstinately, who fight for their own houses and farms, for their own wives and children.

A bill was, therefore, offered for the prevention of any future danger or invasion, or necessity of mercenary forces, by reestablishing and improving the militia. It was passed by the commons, but rejected by the lords. That this bill, the first essay of political consideration, as a subject long forgotten,

should be liable to objection, cannot be strange; but surely, justice, policy, common reason, require, that we should be trusted with our own defence, and be kept no longer in such a helpless state as, at once, to dread our enemies and confederates.

By the bill, such as it was formed, sixty thousand men would always be in arms. We have shown[c] how they may be, upon any exigence, easily increased to a hundred and fifty thousand; and, I believe, neither our friends nor enemies will think it proper to insult our coasts, when they expect to find upon them a hundred and fifty thousand Englishmen, with swords in their hands.

Introduction to the Proceedings of the Committee

Appointed to manage the contributions begun at London, December 18, 1758, for clothing French prisoners of war

The committee intrusted with the money, contributed to the relief of the subjects of France, now prisoners in the British dominions, here lay before the publick an exact account of all the sums received and expended, that the donors may judge how properly their benefactions have been applied.

Charity would lose its name, were it influenced by so mean a motive as human praise; it is, therefore, not intended to celebrate, by any particular memorial, the liberality of single persons, or distinct societies; it is sufficient, that their works praise them.

Yet he, who is far from seeking honour, may very

[c] See Literary Magazine, No. ii. p. 63.

justly obviate censure. If a good example has been set, it may lose its influence by misrepresentation; and, to free charity from reproach is itself a charitable action.

Against the relief of the French only one argument has been brought; but that one is so popular and specious, that, if it were to remain unexamined, it would, by many, be thought irrefragable. It has been urged, that charity, like other virtues, may be improperly and unseasonably exerted; that, while we are relieving Frenchmen, there remain many Englishmen unrelieved; that, while we lavish pity on our enemies, we forget the misery of our friends.

Grant this argument all it can prove, and what is the conclusion?—That to relieve the French is a good action, but that a better may be conceived. This is all the result, and this all is very little. To do the best can seldom be the lot of man: it is sufficient if, when opportunities are presented, he is ready to do good. How little virtue could be practised, if beneficence were to wait always for the most proper objects, and the noblest occasions; occasions that may never happen, and objects that may never be found.

It is far from certain, that a single Englishman will suffer by the charity of the French. New scenes of misery make new impressions; and much of the charity, which produced these donations, may be supposed to have been generated by a species of calamity never known among us before. Some imagine, that the laws have provided all necessary relief, in common cases, and remit the poor to the care

of the publick; some have been deceived by fictitious misery, and are afraid of encouraging imposture; many have observed want to be the effect of vice, and consider casual alms-givers as patrons of idleness. But all these difficulties vanish in the present case: we know, that for the prisoners of war there is no legal provision; we see their distress, and are certain of its cause; we know that they are poor and naked, and poor and naked without a crime.

But it is not necessary to make any concessions. The opponents of this charity must allow it to be good, and will not easily prove it not to be the best. That charity is best, of which the consequences are most extensive: the relief of enemies has a tendency to unite mankind in fraternal affection; to soften the acrimony of adverse nations, and dispose them to peace and amity; in the meantime, it alleviates captivity, and takes away something from the miseries of war. The rage of war, however mitigated, will always fill the world with calamity and horrour; let it not, then, be unnecessarily extended; let animosity and hostility cease together; and no man be longer deemed an enemy, than while his sword is drawn against us.

The effects of these contributions may, perhaps, reach still further. Truth is best supported by virtue: we may hope, from those who feel, or who see, our charity, that they shall no longer detest, as heresy, that religion, which makes its professors the followers of him, who has commanded us to "do good to them that hate us."

ON THE BRAVERY OF THE ENGLISH COMMON SOLDIERS

By those who have compared the military genius of the English with that of the French nation, it is remarked, that "the French officers will always lead, if the soldiers will follow;" and that "the English soldiers will always follow, if their officers will lead."

In all pointed sentences, some degree of accuracy must be sacrificed to conciseness; and, in this comparison, our officers seem to lose what our soldiers gain. I know not any reason for supposing that the English officers are less willing than the French to lead; but it is, I think, universally allowed, that the English soldiers are more willing to follow. Our nation may boast, beyond any other people in the world, of a kind of epidemick bravery, diffused equally through all its ranks. We can show a peasantry of heroes, and fill our armies with clowns, whose courage may vie with that of their general.

There may be some pleasure in tracing the causes of this plebeian magnanimity. The qualities which, commonly, make an army formidable, are long habits of regularity, great exactness of discipline, and great confidence in the commander. Regularity may, in time, produce a kind of mechanical obedience to signals and commands, like that which the perverse cartesians impute to animals; discipline may impress such an awe upon the mind, that any danger shall be less dreaded, than the danger of

[d] This short paper was added to some editions of the Idler, when collected into volumes, but not by Dr. Johnson, as Mr. Boswell asserts, nor to the early editions of that work.

punishment; and confidence in the wisdom, or fortune, of the general may induce the soldiers to follow him blindly to the most dangerous enterprise.

What may be done by discipline and regularity, may be seen in the troops of the Russian emperess, and Prussian monarch. We find, that they may be broken without confusion, and repulsed without flight.

But the English troops have none of these requisites, in any eminent degree. Regularity is, by no means, part of their character: they are rarely exercised, and, therefore, show very little dexterity in their evolutions, as bodies of men, or in the manual use of their weapons, as individuals; they neither are thought by others, nor by themselves, more active, or exact, than their enemies, and, therefore, derive none of their courage from such imaginary superiority.

The manner in which they are dispersed in quarters, over the country, during times of peace, naturally produces laxity of discipline: they are very little in sight of their officers; and, when they are not engaged in the slight duty of the guard, are suffered to live, every man his own way.

The equality of English privileges, the impartiality of our laws, the freedom of our tenures, and the prosperity of our trade, dispose us very little to reverence superiours. It is not to any great esteem of the officers, that the English soldier is indebted for his spirit in the hour of battle; for, perhaps, it does not often happen, that he thinks much better of his leader than of himself. The

French count, who has lately published the Art of War, remarks, how much soldiers are animated, when they see all their dangers shared by those who were born to be their masters, and whom they consider, as beings of a different rank. The Englishman despises such motives of courage: he was born without a master; and looks not on any man, however dignified by lace or titles, as deriving, from nature, any claims to his respect, or inheriting any qualities superiour to his own.

There are some, perhaps, who would imagine, that every Englishman fights better than the subjects of absolute governments, because he has more to defend. But what has the English more than the French soldier? Property they are both, commonly, without. Liberty is, to the lowest rank of every nation, little more than the choice of working or starving; and this choice is, I suppose, equally allowed in every country. The English soldier seldom has his head very full of the constitution; nor has there been, for more than a century, any war that put the property or liberty of a single Englishman in danger.

Whence, then, is the courage of the English vulgar? It proceeds, in my opinion, from that dissolution of dependence, which obliges every man to regard his own character. While every man is fed by his own hands, he has no need of any servile arts; he may always have wages for his labour; and is no less necessary to his employer, than his employer is to him. While he looks for no protection from others, he is naturally roused to be his own protector; and having nothing to abate his esteem of himself,

he, consequently, aspires to the esteem of others. Thus every man that crowds our streets is a man of honour, disdainful of obligation, impatient of reproach, and desirous of extending his reputation among those of his own rank; and, as courage is in most frequent use, the fame of courage is most eagerly pursued. From this neglect of subordination, I do not deny, that some inconveniencies may, from time to time, proceed: the power of the law does not, always, sufficiently supply the want of reverence, or maintain the proper distinction between different ranks; but good and evil will grow up in this world together; and they who complain, in peace, of the insolence of the populace, must remember, that their insolence in peace is bravery in war.

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